

REGIS COLLEGE LIBRARY



3 1761 05808510 1

CANADIAN MESSENGER
LIBRARY

Section

Number

26

mt, mt

CANADIAN
MESSENGER
LIBRARY

“To us, Nazareth and its Holy House, exiled, wandering, angel-borne, Syrian, Dalmatian, Italian, all by turns, are consecrated places, doubly consecrated by their old memories, and also by their strange continued life of local graces, and the efficacious balm of a Divine Presence, awful and undecayed.”

Father Frederick Faber.

BETHLEHEM, CH. 2, P. 66.



NO. 1—LAURETAN BASILICA AND THE APOSTOLIC PALACE.

RELIGIOUS QUESTIONS OF THE DAY

THE
Holy House of Loreto

A CRITICAL STUDY OF DOCUMENTS
AND TRADITIONS

BY
RT. REV. ALEXANDER MACDONALD, D.D.
BISHOP OF VICTORIA, B. C.

CANADIAN
MESSENGER
LIBRARY

CHRISTIAN PRESS ASSOCIATION
PUBLISHING COMPANY
26 BARCLAY STREET, NEW YORK CITY

54065

BT
660
L7
M33
1913

Nihil Obstat

REMIGIUS LAFORT, D.D.

Censor.

Imprimatur :

✠ JOHN CARDINAL FARLEY,

Archbishop of New York

March 25th, 1913

**COPYRIGHTED BY
CHRISTIAN PRESS ASSOCIATION
PUBLISHING COMPANY**

1913

CANADIAN
MESSENGER
LIBRARY

TO

OUR LADY OF LORETO

CONTENTS.

	PAGE
PREFACE	7
INTRODUCTION	13
THE HOLY HOUSE OF LORETO	19
CANON CHEVALIER'S REPLY	212
REJOINDER TO CANON CHEVALIER	234
FATHER HOLWECK AND THE HOLY HOUSE OF LORETO	312
FATHER BEISSEL AND THE HOLY HOUSE OF LORETO	323
FATHER RINIERI AND THE CHURCH OF ST. MARY "IN FUNDO LAURETI"	379

PREFACE

On the Feast of the Visitation, July 2, 1884, I set eyes for the first time on Loreto and its Holy House. I had been ordained priest a few months before, and was on my way home. Loreto drew me to itself, as it has drawn so many, as it drew the illustrious Newman under circumstances similar to my own, in the late forties of the same century.¹ I believed in the miraculous translation of the Holy House with the faith of a little child. Had I been asked to give a reason for my faith, I fancy I should have given the same that Newman does: "Everybody in Rome believes it," and the whole Catholic world has believed it for hundreds of years.

On the first appearance of Canon Chevalier's *Notre Dame de Lorette*, I procured a copy of it. We upholders of the old tradition had been threatened with the book at least two years before its publication. A somewhat cursory reading of the first part, where the learned Canon sets himself to show that the House of

¹ The Life of Cardinal Newman, by Wilfrid Ward, Vol. I.,

the Virgin had ceased to exist in Nazareth centuries before the traditional date of its translation thence, aroused in my mind serious misgivings as to whether the tradition in question was any longer tenable. Yet I clung to it, mainly because I could not see how the God of truth would work so many and so great miracles at the shrine of Loreto if the devotion that gave occasion to them were rooted in error or fraud. A second and more careful reading convinced me that my misgivings were without foundation, and led to the writing of the critical review of Canon Chevalier's work that is published in these pages.

And here let me say that those who, like the Abbé Boudinhon and the late Father de Feis, assume the Lauretan tradition to be purely legendary and at the same time tell us we need suppose fraud on the part of no one, fail to take account of the peculiar circumstances of the case. Ever since 1315, when the Holy House first comes into notice on the hill of Loreto, it has been a noted place of pilgrimage and has had a continuous history. In the early years it was under the immediate jurisdiction of the Bishops of Recanati, and already in 1386 is certified by Pope Urban VI to have been "held in great veneration." If it was venerated for some other reason than that it was believed to

be the House of Nazareth, the story of its miraculous translation, given less than a century after by Teremanus, must needs have been begotten in fraud, and would suppose collusion on the part of all who knew its former history. Yet miracles continued to be wrought in the Lauretan shrine after the time of Teremanus as they had been wrought before.

In approving the Office of the Translation the S. Congr. of Rites expressly declares that the belief is warranted by miracles. Now let us take a parallel case. We all believe to-day that the Blessed Virgin appeared some fifty years ago to a little peasant girl in the Pyrenees. Does our belief rest simply on Bernadette's own straightforward story of the apparitions? By no means. She might have been subject to hallucination. We believe Bernadette because of the miracles wrought in the shrine at Lourdes. *Comprobatur virtute miraculorum*—the story is borne out by the miracles. And yet it is of Loreto, not of Lourdes, that the Church uses these words. We have precisely the same warrant for believing the story told by Teremanus as we have for believing the story told by Bernadette—the miracles without number wrought in confirmation of it.

These papers were written at intervals dur-

ing the past six years. They are now published with certain modifications and additions. If the pronoun of the first person singular is employed oftener than some may deem seemly, the only excuse I can offer is that it takes the place of the editorial "we," which could not be eliminated without a recasting of the whole matter. Some vitally important points are taken up and dealt with more than once, which, while technically a fault, will serve to lay stress upon them and put them in a clearer light.

The words that follow were addressed by the Holy Father through the Cardinal Secretary of State to the Archbishop of Rouen, on the 22nd of April last. I will close with them. Among the "many other questions" to which they "are capable of being applied" is preeminently the question of Loreto:

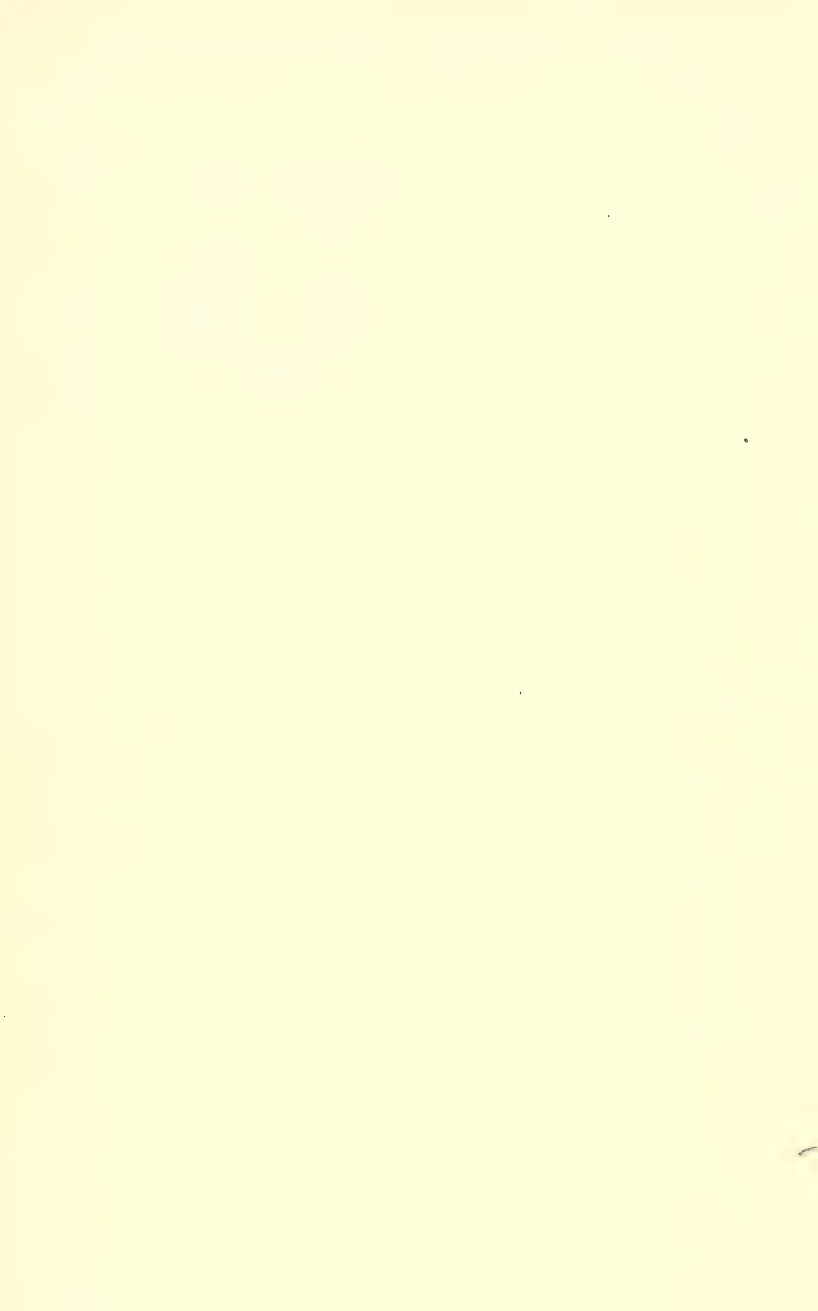
"Nothing is more welcome to the Supreme Pontiff than insistence on the fundamental principles and the rules of the true historical and apologetic method, made, with the doctrinal authority appertaining to their persons and their mission, by those whose pride and duty it is to put themselves at the head of the defenders of pure orthodoxy.

"Your Grace's just and convincing observations on a most vivid tradition, and one most

glorious for the Churches of Provence, are capable of being applied to many other questions which have been distorted under the pompous pretext of a vain erudition by a soi-disant advanced science which is not even sure of itself. May your points serve as a warning against the errors of a presumptuous criticism for all well-intentioned persons and help them to discover in tradition prudently controlled, even in the absence of written documents, the manifest proofs of the truth of things believed.

“May Your Grace’s fine example be a stimulus and encouragement for those upright and vigorous minds who are devoting their energies and their talents to enlightening Christian souls in all fields of intellectual activity, and ward off from them the contagious effects of the more or less subtle poison of Modernism and of the more or less hidden venom of hypercriticism.”

Victoria, B. C.,
February 20, 1913.



INTRODUCTION

The Rev. Father Thurston, S. J., writes in the Catholic Encyclopædia on the Holy House of Loreto. His article is under the heading of "Santa Casa," though one would naturally expect to find it under that of "Loreto" or "Holy House." In the very opening sentence he betrays his lack of close acquaintance with the literature of the subject. "Since the fifteenth century," he tells us, "and possibly even earlier, the 'Holy House' of Loreto has been numbered among the famous shrines of Italy." The word "possibly" indicates that Father Thurston cannot have made a careful reading even of Canon Chevalier's book, for we learn from Chevalier that the Holy House was visited by pilgrims from the early years of the fourteenth century (Ib. pp. 156-157), and that in November, 1387, thirteen years before the close of that century, Urban VI, the first Pope crowned at Rome after the return from Avignon, issued a bull of indulgence in favour

of the shrine at Loreto, which he attests to have been then held "in great veneration."

According to Father Thurston, "the Laurentan tradition is beset with difficulties of the gravest kind." These difficulties "have been skilfully presented in the much discussed work of Canon Chevalier," a work which "has yet found no adequate reply." Chevalier's "general contention" is summed up for us under five heads, as follows:

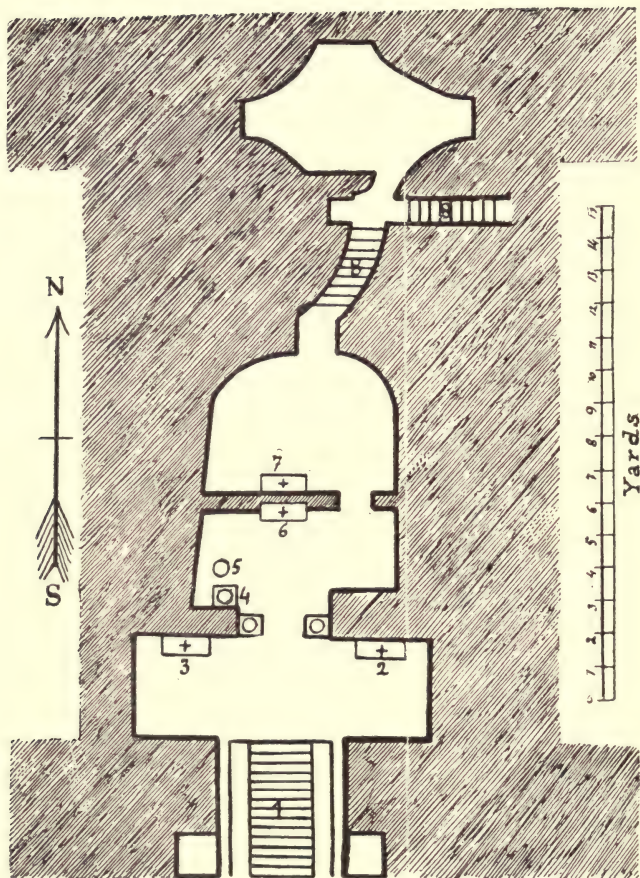
"(1) From the accounts left by pilgrims and others it appears that before the time of the first translation (1291) there was no little cottage venerated at Nazareth which could correspond in any satisfactory way with the present Santa Casa at Loreto. So far as there was question at all in Nazareth of the abode in which the Blessed Virgin had lived, what was pointed out to pilgrims was a sort of natural cavern in the rock. (2) Oriental chronicles and similar accounts of pilgrims are absolutely silent as to any change which took place in 1291. There is no word of the disappearance at Nazareth of a shrine formerly held in veneration there. It is not until the sixteenth century that we find among Orientals any hint of a consciousness of their loss and then the idea was suggested from the West. (3) There are charters and other con-

temporary documents which prove that a church dedicated to the Blessed Virgin already existed at Loreto in the twelfth and thirteenth centuries, that is to say, before the epoch of the supposed translation. (4) When we eliminate certain documents commonly appealed to as early testimonies to the tradition, but demonstrably spurious, we find that no writer can be shown to have heard of the miraculous translation of the Holy House before 1472, i. e., 180 years after the event is supposed to have taken place. The shrine and church are indeed often mentioned; the church is said by Paul II in 1464 to have been miraculously founded, and it is further implied that the statue or image of the Blessed Virgin was brought there by angels, but all this differs widely from details of the later account. (5) If the papal confirmations of the Loreto tradition are more closely scrutinized it will be perceived that not only are they relatively late (the first Bull mentioning the translation is that of Julius II in 1507), but that they are at first very guarded in expression, for Julius introduces the clause "*ut pie creditur et fama est*," while they are obviously dependent upon the extravagant leaflet compiled about 1472 by Teremano."

As against the first two statements, which have the most vital bearing on the truth or

falsehood of the ancient tradition, I shall show in the course of these pages, from the accounts left by pilgrims and others, that before the time of the first translation (1291) there was a little cottage venerated at Nazareth which did correspond in the most satisfactory way to the present Holy House at Loreto; that what was pointed out to pilgrims in the 12th century was an underground crypt consisting partly of a grotto or natural cavern in the rock, and partly of a walled structure which stood in front of the grotto, the whole forming what was known as "the ancient house of Joseph"; lastly, that chronicles of happenings in the East and similar accounts of pilgrims, instead of being absolutely silent as to any change that took place after 1291, plainly indicate that, whereas there was a cottage in front of the grotto of the Annunciation before 1291, it was no longer there when the first pilgrims visited the place subsequently to that date. The statements numbered three, four, and five respectively will be dealt with in their proper places. For the present I will only say that the third statement, as it stands, has no relevancy whatever to the discussion, and is a signal instance of the fallacy known to logicians as *ignoratio elenchi*. For the point is not whether there was at Loreto, or to speak by

the card, "in fundo Laureti," in the twelfth and thirteenth centuries, a parish church dedicated to the Blessed Virgin. It is matter of record that there was such a church. The point is whether there stood then on the hill of Loreto what Father Thurston himself describes as the "tiny cottage" which is now known as the Holy House. It is singular so acute a critic as Father Thurston should not have seen the fatal flaw in this count of Chevalier's indictment of the ancient Lauretan tradition.



NO. 4—PLAN OF THE UNDERGROUND CHAPEL AND GROTTA
AT NAZARETH TO-DAY.

1. Stair leading from the nave of the basilica into the chapel of the Angel.—2. Altar of St. Joachim.—3. Altar of St. Gabriel.—4. Column of St. Gabriel.—5. Column of the Virgin.—6. Altar of the Annunciation.—7. Altar of St. Joseph.—8. Stair cut in the rock leading to the upper grotto and the sacristy.

The Holy House of Loreto

I.

“Our Lady of Loreto: An Historical Inquiry into the Authenticity of the Holy House, by Canon Ulysses Chevalier.” This is an English rendering of the words that appear on the title-page of a stout octavo volume of 500 pages first published in Paris some six years ago. It is a work of vast research, and contains no end of documents. Without any doubt at all it is by far the most serious attempt yet made to discredit the received account of the miraculous translation of the Virgin’s earthly Home. The learned Canon strikes at the very root of the ancient tradition which affirms the cottage that sheltered the Holy Family at Nazareth to have been carried by angels to Dalmatia, and thence to Italy. He professes to show, by the quoted testimonies of eye-witnesses, that the cottage in question ceased to exist at Nazareth hundreds of years before the time when it is said to have been carried away. Thus he believes

he has knocked the bottom clean out of the old tradition, which must needs have had its origin in the pious credulity of the many, and the fraud and forgery of an unscrupulous few.

This work of Chevalier's has been widely regarded as giving its death-blow to the belief that the sanctuary at Loreto is indeed the House of the Incarnation. The argument of the book is based, as has been said, on quoted testimonies, and therefore hinges on the interpretation put upon these. After a careful study of the documents cited by the French savant, I am satisfied that they do not bear out his contention, nay, that they serve to prove the existence of the Holy House in Nazareth prior to 1291, and the disappearance of it about that date.

It is certain that Christians dwelt peacefully in Nazareth for many years after the ascension of Our Lord, and that the lowly Dwelling in which He passed the greater part of His life on earth was to them a hallowed sanctuary. After the final subjection of the Jews, in the fourth decade of the second century, a remnant of them withdrew into Galilee. St. Epiphanius tells us that they suffered neither "Greek, nor Samaritan, nor Christian" to dwell with them, especially in the towns, among which he mentions Nazareth. But it would appear from St.

Epiphanius's own account that Christianity did not become extinct in Galilee, for he relates that, about the year 329, the Emperor Constantine authorized Count Joseph, a convert from Judaism, to erect churches to Christ there, and it would have been a senseless proceeding to erect churches to Christ where there were no Christians. Up to Constantine's own time, *Non licet esse Christianos*—*Christians are not to be suffered to exist*, was the law of the Roman Empire, a law writ in blood, yet Christians managed not only to exist but to multiply in every part of the empire, and even in the shadow of the palace of the Cæsars. We may reasonably assume, therefore, that they managed to exist also in Galilee, despite the hostility of the Jews, and that the holy place of the Incarnation never at any time passed out of remembrance. Chevalier assumes that it did, and that the Christians, in seeking it out afterwards in the time of Constantine, were liable to be mistaken through ignorance or even fraud (p. 50). Let us suppose, for the sake of argument, that all memory of the spot was lost, and that in trying to determine it a mistake was really made. What follows? It follows only that the conclusion which our learned author has laboured so hard to establish is left without a leg to stand on. That conclusion is, in

his own words, "that in 1291 there remained nothing [at Nazareth] to be transferred to Dalmatia, unless the rock itself [in which was the grotto] were to be torn from the mountain" (p. 54). In vain it is sought to be shown that no cottage stood in front of the grotto if there was a mistake, and if the grotto was not at all in the place of the Incarnation. On the other hand, no error or fraud on the part of men could keep the angels from finding the real cottage, and removing it to Dalmatia. Chevalier should have seen that, in suggesting the likelihood of a mistake through ignorance or fraud, he was cutting the ground from under his own feet. The conclusion which he thinks to have fairly established by the testimony of eye-witnesses rests wholly on the assumption that those eye-witnesses were not mistaken in supposing the place they saw and described to be the very place where the Word was made Flesh.

The point is so important that it will be well to put it in a yet clearer light. All that the tradition affirms is that the House of the Incarnation was carried by angels from Nazareth to Tersatto, and thence to Loreto. It says nothing about the site it occupied at Nazareth, though it assumes that it existed there prior and up to 1291. As far as the tradition is con-

cerned, it matters not where the House was so long as it existed. On the other hand, Chevalier's case against the tradition stands or falls with the ancient local tradition of Nazareth which points to a particular spot, in front of a particular grotto, as that on which the Holy House stood. All his ventures are to this one bottom trusted. In going so far, then, as to say that it would be "astonishing" if there were neither error nor fraud in the (supposed) determination of the exact spot, he has himself placed the rock on which his case splits.

It may be urged that to prove the House not to have stood on the traditional site, in the time just before 1291, is tantamount to proving that it did not at all exist, for that it is altogether unlikely it could have continued to exist elsewhere when Nazareth was sacked by the Saracens. But our author has undertaken to prove that there could have been no translation, miraculous or other, of the Holy House from Nazareth to Dalmatia in 1291, because it did not at that time at all exist in the former place. Now, if the traditional site at Nazareth is the true site, his proof, on condition that he makes good his "because," is, miracles apart, certainly conclusive, for, as he himself appositely observes, in the words of the scholastic saw, *prius est esse quam esse tale*, (p. 493)—a

thing must exist as a prerequisite condition of anything being done to it. If, on the other hand, the traditional site is not the true site, the bottom falls out of his proof, as has been pointed out above. All his testimonies go for nothing. And to no purpose will he fall back on the unlikelihood of the House's having continued to exist elsewhere. For it will always be open to those who believe in its miraculous translation to say that it *may have* elsewhere continued to exist, and that it is for him to *prove* that it did not. Even in the ordinary providence of God, it might have survived the sack of the town. And, then, belief in a miraculous translation would warrant belief in a miraculous preservation, if need were. If angels may be believed to have carried off the House, they may the more readily be believed to have preserved it in the time going before.

But I am going to assume that the traditional site is the true one, for there appears to be no serious reason for believing that it is not. Up till the latter half of the sixth century, there is no distinct reference to it in the itineraries of the pilgrims. The reference to Nazareth itself in those early documents is of the briefest. The writers do but mention it as the nursery of the Word Incarnate, or give its distance from other towns (op. cit. pp. 21-26).

About the year 570, for the first time, we find it spoken of by the Pilgrim of Piacenza, known as Antoninus Martyr, and the words in which he speaks of it are significant. I give an exact translation of them from the Latin. "Next [from Cana]," he writes, "we came to the town of Nazareth, in which are many miracles (or wonder-working relics). (*virtutes*). . . . The House of the Blessed Mary is a Basilica, and her garments there are the means of many blessings (*multa ibi sunt beneficia de vestimentis ejus*)."

In a review of Chevalier's work by the well-known English writer, Edmund Bishop, "*virtutes*" is translated "wonderful objects," that is, "relics," and the words, "*et multa ibi sunt beneficia de vestimentis ejus*," are rendered, "and many relics of her garments are there." Now, while Mr. Bishop quotes Antoninus himself as using "*virtutes*" twice in the sense of "relics," he gives no instance of the use of "*beneficia*" in this sense by that or any other writer. And surely to render "*beneficia de vestimentis*" by "relics of garments" is to do violence to the natural meaning of the phrase. It is a rule of right interpretation that words are not to be taken in a non-natural sense if, in their natural and obvious acceptance, they yield an intelligible meaning. "*Beneficia de*

vestimentis ejus—benefits from her garments” is crude Latinity, no doubt, but it is perfectly intelligible. In any case, “beneficia” would not signify ordinary relics, but relics endued with a miraculous virtue. And the same is true of “virtutes.”

All that Chevalier says of this testimony is, “The Pilgrim of Piacenza is the first to tell us, about 570, that Mary’s house is become a basilica, and there does not appear to be any reason for calling his words in question” (p. 51). But what do the words mean? Do they mean that the house was no longer there, and that a basilica stood in the place where it once was? This is Chevalier’s thesis, and this is what he takes the words to mean, but this is not what the pilgrim says. What he says is, “Mary’s house is a basilica.” We may with reason regret that he sacrificed clearness to brevity, but we must not lose sight of the fact that what he made the statement about was the “house of the Blessed Mary”—not the cave in front of which stood the house, but the house itself. And what he says of it is not that it no longer existed, and that a basilica stood on the spot once occupied by it, but that the house was a basilica. There must be some sense in which his words are true, and in no sense would they be true if the house were no longer there. In

that case, he would not at all have made the house the subject of a predicate in the present tense save one that should indicate its non-existence. Now "is a basilica" indicates the existence of the house, in some way—not, indeed, as it once was, but as forming part, and to the pilgrim the essential part, of that which it is affirmed to be, "a basilica," for it is absurd to suppose that the house itself, without addition, could be described as a basilica. The house might be said to be a basilica because it formed the crypt of the basilica built in the place of the Incarnation, the very core, and, as they say in French, the whole *raison d'être*, of the basilica. It was because the house was there that the basilica was there. And as the latter was prominently visible, while the former was hidden inside of it, the existence of both on the same spot is tersely signified by the statement that the house is a basilica. This interpretation of the words seems to be borne out also by the statement that follows, for the pilgrim tells us that the garments of the Blessed Virgin were still there, and were instrumental in conferring "benefits" or blessings, of a kind, no doubt, with those communicated to the faithful in earlier days by the handkerchiefs that had touched the body of St. Paul (Acts, 19:12). Naturally the garments would have been in

the house, and, if the house had been destroyed, would hardly have escaped destruction. At any rate, the words of this pilgrim—and they are of exceptional interest and value as being the words of the first eye-witness who mentions either the house or the basilica—favour the view that the house was still there, rather than the opposite.

The next testimony is that of Adamnan, Abbot of Iona, who relates, not what he saw, but what he had from the lips of a pilgrim bishop, of the name of Arculfus, who visited Nazareth about a century after the Pilgrim of Piacenza. Arculfus witnesses to the existence there, at the time of his visit of “two very large churches,” one of which “is erected (*habetur fabricata*) on the spot where was built the house in which the Archangel Gabriel” saluted the Blessed Virgin. Our author takes these words necessarily to imply that the house was no longer there. He fails to note that the antithesis is in the verbal forms which describe *the act of building* relatively to the present and the past or pluperfect: “*habetur fabricata*”—“*fuera constructa*.” Adamnan makes Arculfus say, not that the church *stands* where the house *stood*, but that the church *is built* where the house *had been built*. It is of the act of building, not of the building itself, that “had been”

is predicated. I readily admit that the words of Adamnan, even when thus strictly construed, lend themselves more easily to the view that the house was not there any longer; and the Venerable Bede, who reproduces Adamnan's account, with slight variations, appears to have so understood them, for he simply sets down that, "The other church is where the house was." But we must remember that we are dealing with a second-hand statement, and that we are simply unable to say precisely how the first-hand statement ran.

The next witness is an English monk, Willibald by name, who visited Palestine upwards of half a century after Arculfus. His testimony, too, rests on the relation of others. It is of interest as being the first to mention the presence of the Saracens in the Holy Land. It appears from his account that the Christians had, time and time again, to redeem with money the Church of the Annunciation at Nazareth from the vandal paynims, who threatened to destroy it.

The Crusades, as is well known, were organized to rescue the Holy Places from the hands of the infidels. On the taking of Jerusalem by the soldiers of the Cross (July 15, 1099), Godfrey of Bouillon was proclaimed King. He ceded the principality of Galilee to

Tancred, under whom the Church of the Annunciation at Nazareth, which had been defiled and, as it would appear, in great part destroyed by the Saracens, was restored. While the place was yet in possession of the Christians, it was visited, in the first or second decade of the twelfth century by a Russian abbot named Daniel. He is the first and before 1291, with the exception of the Greek John Phocas, the only one who gives a detailed account of what he witnessed there. From this account it can be shown conclusively that the Holy House, at the time of the Russian pilgrim's visit, formed, with the cave in front of which it stood, the crypt of the Church of the Annunciation. But the way that Chevalier manipulates the testimony of this eye-witness must first be pointed out.

II.

Canon Chevalier devotes the greater part of his voluminous work to the publication of documents. He cites *in extenso* bull after bull and brief after brief of the Popes, only an infinitesimal part of which has any relevancy to the question under discussion. He gives three whole pages to a rehearsal of Dean Stanley's pretentious but shallow arraignment of the Lauretán tradition in the work entitled, *Sinai and Palestine*. But of Daniel's detailed account of what he saw with his own eyes at Nazareth, while it was yet in possession of the Crusaders, and there was ample opportunity of examining the place of the Incarnation, Chevalier presents but a garbled statement. Here is the full account rendered into English, with the parts omitted by Chevalier printed in black letter:

“Paragraph 89.—Nazareth is a little town situated in a valley at the foot of mountains, and the traveller does not see it until he looks upon it from above. A large and stately church, with three altars, stands in the middle

of the town. On entering it one sees on the left, before a little altar, a grotto small of size but deep, which has two doors, one on the west the other on the east, by which one goes down into the grotto. Entering by the west door, one has on one's right a cell into which there is a small entrance, and in which the Blessed Virgin lived with Christ. He was brought up in this sacred cell, which contains the bed in which Jesus slept. It is so low as to seem almost on a level with the floor.

“Paragraph 90 [omitted by Chevalier]—*On entering this same grotto by the west door, one has, on one's left, the tomb of Joseph, spouse of Mary, who was laid here by the pure hands of Christ. From the wall near his tomb there issues a whitish liquid, resembling holy oil, which is used to heal the sick.*

“Paragraph 91.—In this same grotto, near the west door, is the place where the holy Virgin Mary was seated near the door spinning purple, that is to say, scarlet thread, when the archangel Gabriel, sent by God, appeared to her.

“Paragraph 92.—My eyes rested on this place [where the Angel appeared]. It is not far from the spot where the Blessed Virgin was seated. There are three sachines [21 feet] from the door to where Gabriel stood. In that

place is erected on a column a little round marble altar, where Mass is offered up.

“Paragraph 93.—The space occupied by this sacred grotto was the house of Joseph, and it was in this house everything came to pass. Over the grotto is built a church, dedicated to the Annunciation. This holy place was ravaged in the time going before, and it is the French who have restored the buildings with the greatest care. A wealthy Latin bishop resides here, and has the place under his jurisdiction. He treated us very kindly, [rest omitted by Chevalier] *gave us to eat and drink, and we passed the night in the town. After a good night's rest, we rose next morning, and repaired to the church to venerate the sanctuary. We entered the grotto, and there prostrated ourselves in all the holy places. Afterwards we went out of the town, and directed our steps to the southeast where we came upon a remarkable well, very deep, of which the water is quite cold, and to which one goes down by steps. A round church, dedicated to the Archangel Gabriel, is built over this well.*

“Paragraph 94 [omitted by Chevalier]—*The distance of the holy well from the town of Nazareth is about the cast of an arrow. It was at this well that the Blessed Virgin was first greeted by the Angel. She had come to draw water and had filled her pail when she heard the voice of the*

unseen angel: Hail, full of grace, the Lord is with thee. She looked about her on every side, and not seeing any one but hearing the voice only, she took up her water jug and retraced her steps, wondering greatly and saying to herself: What means this voice that I've heard without seeing anybody? Returned to her house at Nazareth, she seated herself in the place already referred to and set herself to spin the purple. It was then the Archangel Gabriel appeared to her, standing in the place above mentioned, and announced to her the birth of Christ."

I have said that what Chevalier sets before his readers is a garbled statement of Daniel's account. I do not say that the garbling was done of set purpose, but circumstances point in that direction. At any rate the effect of it is to throw a cloud of uncertainty over the clearest, fullest, and with the single exception of the account left to us by John Phocas, far the most important testimony of any pilgrim to Nazareth before 1291. The suppression of paragraph 90 makes it impossible to say whether the grotto spoken of in paragraph 89 is the same as that described in paragraphs 91, 92, and 93. More than this, it creates a presumption of their not being the same; for, according to Daniel, the grotto spoken of in paragraph 89 was under a church which stood

in the middle of the town, whereas the Church of the Annunciation, built over the grotto mentioned in the other paragraphs, stood, and having been rebuilt in the same place, still stands at the edge of the town. In matter of fact Chevalier cites this testimony of Daniel (p. 51), to show that the church which is said to have been seen in the middle of the town by Arculfus in the 7th century, and which writers refer to as the Church of the Nutrition, still existed in the 12th century, and was the one described by Daniel as having been built over the grotto and "cell" where "the Virgin lived with Christ."

But let us now see and note carefully what the Russian pilgrim says of this underground place. He tells us that there was to the right of one who entered it by the west door the entrance to the cell or cot in which dwelt Jesus and Mary. Therefore this cell, so called probably because it was underground and formed part of the crypt of the church, was distinct from the grotto or cave first mentioned by him, for "a small entrance," or opening, or door led into it from the grotto. Moreover, the back of the grotto which is pointed out at Nazareth to-day is to the north, and as it thus opens to the south, one who enters it from the west has on his left the whole space occupied by it. But it was to his right as he entered by the west

door, that Daniel saw the entrance into the dwelling place of the Virgin and her Son. Therefore at the time of Daniel's visit, the room, or cell or cot (call it what you will), in which dwelt Jesus and Mary, still stood in front of the grotto at Nazareth.

But the testimony of this eye-witness is not yet exhausted. In describing the place of the Incarnation, he tells us that from the door near which the Blessed Virgin was seated to the spot where Gabriel stood there are "three sachines," or 21 feet. He does not say whether the door in question was the one that opened into the grotto, or the one that led from the grotto into the house. But whichever of the two you take it to be, it follows that Mary and Gabriel could not have both been in the grotto. Belardo of Ascoli, who visited Nazareth a few years after Daniel, and whose testimony is cited by Chevalier at page 33, gives us the exact measurements of the grotto at that time (it appears to have been somewhat enlarged by 1720, when the church was rebuilt). He tells us it was "four paces long, and as many wide," i. e. about 12 feet square. Plainly, then, the Angel could not have been in the grotto, whether or no the Virgin was there, for the greatest distance from any corner of the grotto to the door that opened into it, or the door that

led from it into the house, would be considerably less than 21 ft. Hence the Angel, at any rate, must have been in the house. And Daniel tells us that on the spot where he stood there was an altar on which Mass was celebrated. This altar, then, must have been in the house, and the house itself, at the time of Daniel's visit, must have formed part of the crypt of the Church of the Annunciation.

Once more, Daniel tells us that, "The space occupied by this grotto was the house of Joseph, and it was there everything took place." We have seen that the space thus described was enclosed within wider limits than those of the grotto proper, or cave; whence it appears that the word "grotto" is here used by the Russian pilgrim in the sense of underground chapel or crypt. "If Daniel," pertinently observes Garrat, "on going down into this ancient crypt, partly rock and partly masonry covered with cement, did not notice exactly the difference and speaks of the whole as a vault, or a cavern, because it was all equally underground, most of us would do the same, if we were taken deep down underground to visit any similar crypt formed of rock and masonry."

But, it may be objected, he says it "was" the house of Joseph, which implies that only the place occupied by the house was there, not the

house itself. Such an implication, however, is excluded by the context. For he tells us that there was an altar to mark the place where Gabriel stood, and this altar, as we have seen, must have been outside of the cave and in front of it, i. e. within the limits of the space occupied by the house. Now if this space were not still enclosed by walls, no altar would have stood there, nor would the memory of the precise spot have been preserved. And in fact, after the lapse of only about half a century from the time when the angels are believed to have removed the house from the crypt of the church (1291), it is not an altar that is said (about 1340) to have marked the place where Gabriel stood, but he is said to have been standing against a pillar, while the Virgin is said (1345) to have clasped another pillar in fear when she heard the Angel's salutation, and these two pillars are said (1481-84) to have been only 2 1-2 *brazas* (probably cubits) apart.¹

It is evident that traditional memorials and measurements had undergone sweeping changes since Daniel visited the place, though Chevalier fancies he has shown that everything remained just as it had been.²

Consider, moreover, that Daniel had already

¹ *Notre Dame de Lorette*, pp. 60, 61, 70.

² *Ib.* p. 72.

distinguished between the grotto proper, or cave, and the "cell" in which, according to the living tradition of the place, a tradition handed down from the earliest times, "the Blessed Virgin lived with Christ." When, therefore, he tells us in paragraph 93 that "the space occupied by this sacred grotto was the house of Joseph, in which everything took place," he makes "grotto" include both the cave and the "cell" into which a "little entrance" led from the cave, as he explains in paragraph 89. It is plain, then, that what had once been "the house of Joseph" was now an underground chapel or crypt, consisting of a cave and a "cell" which stood in front of it. Therefore, at the time of Daniel's visit, there stood before the cave which is pointed out to-day at Nazareth what Daniel calls the "cell, in which the Blessed Virgin lived with Christ."

So much for this singularly important testimony, of which Chevalier does not gauge the bearing nor even attempt a critical analysis. All that he does is to cite it in proof of his contention that the church which is said to have stood in the middle of the town toward the close of the 7th century was still there at the beginning of the twelfth. It becomes needful, therefore, to go into this matter at some length.

III.

The first point we have to inquire into is how Daniel came to speak of the Church of the Annunciation at Nazareth as being in the middle of the town. Arculfus, in 670, mentions this church as other than the one which then stood there. Belardo d' Ascoli, who was at Nazareth a short time after Daniel, describes the grotto over which this church was built as being "on one side of the city (*in latere civitatis*).” That grotto has ever since been the goal of pilgrims from all parts of the world; some of them state expressly that it is situated at or near the edge of the town; it is to be seen to-day at the south-west corner of Nazareth, in the crypt of the modern church, while the ruins of the old basilica that enclosed it are distinctly traceable round about. There is, therefore, no doubt at all as to where that basilica stood in the 12th century.

Ancient Nazareth was "a city set on a hill." This is how Adamnan, in his relation of what Arculfus saw there in 670, describes it—"super montem posita." On the other hand, Daniel says: "Nazareth is a little village (*petit bourg*),

situated in a glen (*vallon*), at the foot of mountains, and one does not see it till one is above it." Here is further contradiction, and yet it is but on the surface. Each describes what he saw, but that which they saw was not the same. Arculfus saw old Nazareth, in Scripture called a "city," built within the folds of a circle of hills facing the great plain of Esdraelon. Daniel, on the other hand, saw the Nazareth of the Crusaders, a mere cluster of cottages standing round the great cathedral and monastery of the Annunciation, restored by Tancred. Nazareth had been laid in ruins by the Saracens. When the place fell into the hands of the crusaders, instead of clearing up the ruins and rebuilding on the ancient site, they chose rather to build, for the most part, on lower ground, at the foot of the hill, and round about the Church of the Annunciation, which served as the cathedral. Such has ever been the custom with Latin Christians: church in the centre, houses grouped around it.

When Belardo says the grotto was "on one side of the city," he has in mind the Nazareth of the olden time, not the *petit bourg* which his contemporary Daniel saw in a valley, "at the foot of mountains." So much may be gathered from the word "civitas," which he employs; also, from the past tense, "fuit."—Cella Dom-

ine nostre, . . . cripta fuit syta in latere civitatis," "The chamber of Our Lady, . . . was a grotto situated on one side of the city," that is to say, when "the Angel Gabriel was sent by God to a city of Galilee, named Nazareth" (Luke 2). The Nazareth which interested him was the city that lay in ruins on the slope of the hill, the city whose streets had so oft been trodden by the Saviour, not the hamlet that sprang up at the foot of the hill. And so with many a pilgrim after him, who has eyes only for the Nazareth that was. Thus to the Dominican Burchard of Mount Sion, in 1283, Nazareth is still "that blessed city of Galilee" (p. 48), and Boniface Stefain, in 1573, speaks of "the hill (*montem*) on which is situated the city of Nazareth, the nursery of Christ" (p. 80). On the other hand, most of the pilgrims speak of the new Nazareth, and one or two of them expressly distinguish it from the old. "It was a city at one time," wrote Anselm of Poland in 1508; "now it is a little bit of a town (*oppidulum parvum*), like Bethlehem, containing but a few houses" (p. 76). Nigh two centuries before him (1332), William Boldensal came to "the holy city of Nazareth, which is now a village of the plain (*villa campestris*),¹ shrunken in

¹ *Tria genera, agrorum campestre, collinum, et montanum*—Three kinds of country, level or low-lying, hilly and mountainous (Varrus).

size, with its dwellings not close together, but scattered, and at some distance apart " (p. 59). "It was set on a hill, but at present is but a wretched village of which the dwellings are for the most part but grottos dug out (*fuities*) in the side of the hill " (p. 97). So Francis Charles of Rozal described it in 1664. Joseph Romain Joly (1772) tells us that it "is in the lower village (*dans la ville basse*) the house of the Blessed Virgin was " (p. 107).

Two accounts, both later than 1291, agree with that of Daniel in placing the Church of the Annunciation, or rather the ruins of it, in the middle of the village. In 1463, a Franciscan Father describes Nazareth "as a village of perhaps two hundred homes *amid which (inter quas)* still exists the temple of St. Gabriel, falling to ruin." That he means by "the temple of St. Gabriel" the Church of the Annunciation is plain from the words that follow, for he goes on to mention the place under this temple where the Angel saluted the Virgin (p. 67). And Eugene Roger, a Recollect, who spent twenty months at Nazareth between 1629 and 1634, writes, in his *La Terre Sainte*: "It is believed (*On tient*) that the house where the Angel greeted the Blessed Virgin, and where she dwelt with Our Lord and St. Joseph, was the patrimony of St. Anne. It is *in the middle of the*

village, but in the lower part which is toward the east." He does not mean that the house was still there, but that there was a chapel built on the site where it stood, fronting the grotto. "It is believed," he says in the next paragraph, "that the angels have taken away and carried to Loreto the house, which was made of small flag-stones in the form of brick" (p. 96).

Chevalier, then, is astray himself and leads his readers astray when he cites Daniel as witnessing to the existence, some time between 1106 and 1115, of the church which Arculfus is said to have seen "in the middle of the city." He was misled by Daniel's expression "in the middle of the village (*au milieu du bourg*)," and failed to note the distinction (not verbal merely) between "civitas" and "bourg," the Nazareth of the Gospels and the Nazareth of the Crusaders—a distinction which is writ legibly across the face of the documents that he cites himself.

IV.

If the church described by Adamnan as standing in the middle of the city (*in medio civitatis loco*) ever really stood there, it must have disappeared before the time of Daniel's visit. The monk Willibald, about 725, mentions but one church, and Saewulf, who visited the place a few years before Daniel, tells us that the city (*civitas*) had been "entirely laid waste and thrown down (*praecipitata*) by the Saracens," but that in the place of the Annunciation there was "a very fine monastery"—a form of words which may be taken to imply that the basilica had not as yet been restored at that time (1102). Now there is no reason to believe that the church which is said to have stood in the middle of the ancient town escaped the fate of other prominent structures, nor is it ever after spoken of by any pilgrim.

Adamnan relates that this church was "erected on the spot where formerly was built the house in which Our Lord was brought up (*nutritus*).” These words would imply that Our Lord was not brought up in the house at the

side of the town, where the Annunciation took place. There is indeed an hypothesis, plausibly defended by not a few recent writers, that the Blessed Virgin was still living under the paternal roof, when the Angel came to her, and that, some little time afterwards, she went to live with St. Joseph in his own house. It is pointed out that she is spoken of by St. Luke as "espoused" to Joseph at the time of the Annunciation; therefore, it is argued, not yet married; therefore not yet living with him. But shortly after this she is called his "wife" (Matt. 1:20), and when they went up to Bethlehem together to be enrolled she is spoken of as his "espoused wife," or, as ancient codices have it, simply "betrothed." (Luke 2:6). They were living together then, and continued to live together after. Now "espoused wife" (Luke 2:6) means no more than "espoused to a man whose name was Joseph" (Luke 1:27), and there is no reason why this latter phrase should exclude the idea of their being living together, since the former phrase does not. The Evangelist appears to have employed these expressions, "espoused" and "espoused wife" of set purpose to indicate the peculiar, though not altogether exceptional, character of the marriage relation between Mary and Joseph. Theirs was a real

marriage, a real contract as between husband and wife, but a union of wills and souls only, a spiritual wedlock. This union of wills, effected by free and mutual consent, subsisted from the day of their espousals, and whether there was any subsequent ceremony or not, after the custom of the Jewish people, there existed, before the annunciation, a mutual understanding that their union was ever to remain a purely spiritual one, as is shown by the words of the Virgin, *How shall this be, seeing that I know not man?* But they could not have reached this mutual understanding before they were married, for it would have been incompatible with the validity of the marriage contract.¹ Therefore, whether it be assumed that the contract of espousals under the Jewish law included all the essential elements of a marriage contract, or whether it be maintained that the subsequent ceremonial at the wedding supplied an essential element, the truth appears to be that the Blessed Virgin and St. Joseph were really married before the annun-

¹ I am not unaware that theologians of great name may be cited against this position. But as it does not come within my scope to discuss the point, I simply take refuge behind the authority of the prince of theologians, St. Thomas of Aquin, who says of an absolute vow of virginity: "Such a condition being opposed to the primary end (bonum) of marriage would render it null and void (matrimonium tolleretur)."—4 S D. XXX. 2, II. quaest. 2 ad 2 *um*.

ciation, and that, being married, they were living together. Nor does this conflict with what we read Matt. 1:18, 25, where Joseph is told not to be afraid to take Mary his wife, whom he was thinking of putting away privately. For what he is told is not that he should not be afraid to take her to wife, but simply to take his wife. How, it may justly be asked, if *paralabein* here meant "to take from the home of her parents to his own," i. e. to celebrate the wedding, could Mary, later on (Luke 2: 6), be still spoken of as "the espoused wife," or simply "the betrothed," of Joseph? The fact is that the word bears here its ordinary New Testament meaning, which is *to associate with oneself another person or persons in a given work, or on a journey*. And it is to be remarked that, as often as it is used in this its predominant meaning, the person or persons so associated are *already with the one* who takes them as his companions. Thus, Matt. 20:17, "And as Jesus was going up to Jerusalem, he took the twelve apart (*parelaben*), and in the way he said unto them, etc." Of course they were already with Him when He took them apart. See also Matt. 26:37; Mark 4:36, 5:40, 9:2, 10:32; Luke 9:10 and 28, 11:26, 10:31; Acts 15:39. On the other hand, when the meaning to be expressed is *to take to oneself a person or persons who are not living*

with one, to take from the place where they are to the place where oneself is, the expression is *paralambanein pros eauton*. An instance is in John 14:3, where Our Lord says to His disciples, "And if I go and prepare a place for you, I come again, and will take you unto myself *paralepsomai pros emauton*: that where I am, you may be also." We therefore understand the words of the Angel to mean that Joseph should not fear to take Mary his wife, who is already living with him, as his helpmate and companion for life. And this interpretation fits the context, for we are told that Joseph was seriously thinking of putting his newly wedded wife away, or as the Greek has it, of severing the tie between them (*apolousai*), and so putting her wholly out of his life. There is a tradition, mixed up indeed with legend in the Apocrypha, that Mary was brought up in the temple, and that it was there that she was espoused to Joseph. If this was so, the home-coming to Nazareth would have been the induction of the bride into the home of the bridegroom, wherein the Jewish wedding essentially consisted.

Most of the Fathers who discuss this point hold that Joseph and Mary were living together when the Angel came to Mary. The reason they give, and it certainly seems a cogent one,

is that the good name of the Virgin and the honour of Christ our Saviour imperatively required this. If Cæsar's wife must be above suspicion, how much more must the Spouse of the Holy Spirit and the Mother of the Saviour be secured against everything that could give even the faintest pretext for gossip to scandal-mongers. Now, this is how St. Chrysostom puts the case: *She who conceives and is found to be with child outside the house of her spouse is liable to suspicion (In Matt. 1).* This would hold true all the more in the instance of one who was betrothed only. For, according to Jewish custom, during the interval between the betrothal and the wedding (which consisted, as already observed, in the ceremonious removal of the bride from the father's house to that of the bridegroom), intercourse between the two was through a third party, known as "the friend of the bridegroom." The fact that the Jews, much as they hated and maligned Our Lord, never even hinted a doubt on the score of His legitimacy, and the further fact that He passed unquestioned among His townsmen as "the son of Joseph" (Luke 4:22), "the carpenter's son" (Matt. 13:55), go to show how jealously all occasion for even the shadow of suspicion against the stainless Virgin that bore Him had been guarded against.

It seems, then, most probable, if indeed it be not certain, that Joseph and Mary lived under the same roof at Nazareth when the Angel Gabriel was by God sent thither. We need not stop to inquire whether the cottage in which they dwelt was Joseph's own, or, as ancient tradition has it, Joseph's only in virtue of the Jewish law, as being the dowry, or rather the patrimony, of his spouse. Naturally, on their return from Egypt the Holy Family would take up their abode in the house that had forever been hallowed by the mystery of the Incarnation. Even if they had been living apart at the time of the annunciation, they would be most likely to choose for their home, on coming back to Nazareth, "Blessed Mary's house," as it is called by the Pilgrim of Piacenza, the house where the Word was made Flesh. Here, in the after time, stood the first Christian church built at Nazareth; here were pointed out to the pilgrims the rooms occupied by Our Lord and His Blessed Mother; here, in the sacred cave, was shown to the Russian pilgrim, Daniel, the tomb of St. Joseph; here, according to the immemorial tradition of the East as well as of the West, was the only home the Holy Family ever knew in Nazareth.

As against this tradition, reinforced by the considerations dwelt upon above, we can not

accept Adamnan's second-hand statement that the house in which Our Lord was brought up or "nourished" (*nutritus*) was "in the middle of the city," and that it was other than the one which the Pilgrim of Piacenza refers to as "Blessed Mary's house," Daniel and John Phocas as "the house of Joseph." We cannot accept it, (1) because it is second-hand; (2) because it not only conflicts with tradition, and the testimony of witnesses who were on the spot, but is also found to be out of joint with the context in which it stands. For Adamnan goes on to relate that under this same church which stood in the middle of the city was "a limpid fountain, whence all the people of the town came to draw water (*quem totus civium frequentat populus*)."

This is the public well of Nazareth; there is but one such in the place; it is not in the middle but in the outskirts of the town, "near the city" says Saewulf (1102), "at the entrance," says Phocas (1177), and about 600 yards from the grotto of the Annunciation. Therefore Adamnan's statements are not consistent with each other, and by all the laws of evidence his testimony must be ruled out.

At pp. 120-23, Chevalier makes a long extract from the work by Mgr. Le Camus, entitled *Notre voyage aux pays Bibliques—My Journey to Bible Lands*. "The Nuns of Nazareth," writes

the Bishop, "in the course of excavations made near their convent, have discovered the ancient grotto visited by Arculfus in the 7th century." On this I remark (1) that the site on which Nazareth stands is "honey-combed by ancient caves," as Garrat puts it (p. 38); (2) that Adamnan, in relating what Arculfus told him, speaks of a house, but, if I understand him rightly, makes no mention of a grotto. The passage runs: "Una [ecclesia] in medio civitatis, loco, super duos fundata caneros, ubi quondam illa fuerat domus constructa, in qua Dominus noster nutritus est Salvator. Haec eadem ecclesia, duobus, ut superius dictum est, tumulis et interpositis arcubus suffulta, habet inferius inter eosdem tumulos lucidissimum fontem collocatum, quem totus civium frequentat populus, de illo exhauriens aquam—One church is in the middle of the city, fixed upon two *canceri*, where formerly was erected the house in which our Lord and Saviour was reared. This same church, resting, as has been said above, on two mounds and arches built between, has underneath it, between the mounds, a limpid fountain, to which all the townspeople are in the habit of coming to draw water." The meaning of "caneros" which appears to have been taken to signify "caves" or "cisterns," is indicated by Adamnan himself

in the words, "resting, *as has been said above*, on two mounds and intervening arches." The term "cancer" is the root-form of "cancellus," which, in architecture, signifies a balustrade, bolster, or buttress. It is not a grotto or cistern, but a fountain that will serve to mark the place where stood the church described by Adamnan. There are grottos without number in Nazareth; there is but one public well, and it is not "in the middle of the city." It is plain from Adamnan's account that the church seen by Arculfus was built over the public well. Upon the whole it is not an unlikely conjecture that Arculfus spoke to his host, the Abbot, of the workshop of Joseph, where Our Lord spent so many days with His foster-father, and that the Abbot, when writing out his account afterwards from notes taken at the time, fell into the mistake of supposing it to have been at or near the public well. "These notes," observes Mr. Bishop (*The Tablet*, Oct. 27, 1906), "but mixed with a good deal of learned and critical book-work of Adamnan's, are 'the three books of the Holy Places' we possess. Fortunately, so far as Nazareth is concerned, he mixes up with the account of the pilgrim no matter of his own." Things got mixed up somehow, and it looks very much as if Adamnan did the mixing.

NOTE.—Mgr. Le Camus (*La Vie de N. S. Jesus Christ*, Vol. I, p. 166) quotes Philo as affirming (*De Spec. Leg.* p. 788) that among the Hebrews betrothal begot the same obligations as marriage, whereof it conferred all the rights, save cohabitation; and Selden (*Uxor. Hebr.* 2 lib. ii, ch. 1) as saying that the child conceived during the time between betrothal and marriage was not deemed to be illegitimate in law nor before the bar of public opinion. He adds in a footnote: “This is decisive in favour of the view which places the conception [of Christ] before Mary’s marriage.” I cannot think so. A Hebrew maiden who should thus be found with child during the time between betrothal and marriage would indeed escape stoning, and the child would be free from the stigma of illegitimacy. But would not the betrothed couple be open to the imputation of incontinency? And the child, would it not be regarded as born out of due time? That a betrothed damsel should conceive while she was still living under her father’s roof must have been exceptional. The law which assumes her to be a virgin until she is handed over to the bridegroom on the day of the marriage (Deut. xxii, 13–21); the custom which required communications between the betrothed to be conveyed through “the friend of the bridegroom;” the marriage ceremony itself, with its formal induction of the veiled bride into the chamber of the bridegroom—all plainly imply that conception was not supposed to have place before cohabitation. If “among the Jews, betrothal was a real marriage” (The Catholic Encyclopædia, Vol. XV, p. 464), it was so only in the sense of our *matrimonium ratum*. There is an added reason for believing that the Blessed Virgin was married when the Angel came to her in the fact that she passed the following three months with her cousin Elizabeth. “If,” observes Benedict XIV, “the Virgin had not been the wife of Joseph while she stayed with Elizabeth, who, unknowing the mystery, on finding her

with child after her return, could refrain from the suspicion that she had been wronged in the home of her cousin?" (*De Festis B. V. M.*, cap. 3 n. 6). Bertrand (*Dictionnaire des Religions*, Vol. III, col. 509) tells us that what was implied in the law of Moses was explicitly brought out in the civil code of the Jews, which banned the use of marriage before the solemnization of it. "Such," he says, "was the ordinance of the elders; for the law of Moses, according to them, did not expressly forbid this, but only the civil law, in the interest of public decency and to check licentiousness. If the betrothed couple," he adds, "contravened this rule, they were condemned to be flogged." Therefore, to safeguard the honour of the Holy Family it is not enough to stave off suspicion of illegitimacy in the offspring. The public sentiment which held carnal intercourse during the period between betrothal and marriage to be a shame and a disgrace, must also be reckoned with.

V.

Before passing on to examine other documents, I would again call attention to Chevalier's misuse of Daniel's testimony touching the church which stood "in the middle of the village." He cites the Russian pilgrim (p. 51) as confirming Adamnan's account of a church built over the place "where our Lord and Saviour was reared." Now Adamnan speaks expressly of another church which was built over the place of the Annunciation. And it was under this latter church that Daniel found the cell or cot "in which the Blessed Virgin lived with Christ," and of which he says: "[Our Lord] was reared in this sacred cell, which contains the bed on which he slept." Also, he says this sacred cell was in "the house of Joseph," in which "all took place." He thus makes Joseph's house as well the place of the Annunciation as the place in which Our Lord was brought up—in direct opposition to Adamnan, who has the Annunciation in one house (Mary's), and Our Lord brought up in another (Joseph's). Far from confirming Adamnan's

account, therefore, Daniel does but join his own with the other pilgrim voices which convey down through the ages the ancient tradition of Nazareth regarding the identity of the house of the Annunciation with that in which Our Lord was brought up.

Belardo of Ascoli visited Nazareth, as already observed, a few years after Daniel. His account, says Mr. Bishop, "is brief, full, and on the whole clear." Brief, and fairly clear, too, it is, but certainly not full. I give it as done into English by Mr. Bishop himself: "The cell of our Lady in which the angel came to her, was an underground grotto (or cave—*cripta*) on one side of the city; but inside eastwards not built of stones but scooped out of the rock, about four paces long and as many broad." This is a faithful rendering of the Latin text, which is more than can be said of Chevalier's, who translates "*syta in latere civitatis, intus tamen ex parte orientis non ex lapidibus facta, sed sic in saxo cavata,*" as if there was a comma after "*orientis,*" thus: "(a grotto) situated on the inner side [whatever that may mean!] of the town, on the part of the east, not made of stones, but hollowed out in the rock." This would refer "not made of stones, etc.," to the grotto as a whole, whereas, in the literal translation as given by Mr.

Bishop, the phrase describes the grotto "inside eastwards," i. e. the walls of the grotto that were inside, from the mouth of it, and toward the east of one who entered it by the mouth. Mr. Bishop understands "inside eastwards" to mean that the grotto runs eastwards into the rock, which is not so: it runs northwards. Belardo no doubt entered the grotto, as did Daniel, by the door at the southwest corner. From there the grotto proper, or cave, ran east by north of him, while to the south was the north wall of the cot which Daniel saw, on his right, as he entered. Now this wall, being that of the cottage, rather than of the cave, was built of stones, which may serve to explain the limiting clause, "inside eastwards not built of stones, but scooped out of the rock."

Mr. Bishop gathers from extracts given by Chevalier (pp. 85-88) that the "grotto is to be understood as running from west to east." It is the ancient basilica, not the grotto, that is so described, in the extracts referred to. "[The basilica] ran from west to east," writes Quaresimus (p. 88); "it had two rows of columns; the sacred grotto and chapel of the Annunciation was on the left as you entered the church, in the north transept, to wit, and there was a descent of six steps to it." The grotto, which was in the north transept, opened towards the

south, and the basilica ran west and east on the same lines as the house that closed up the mouth of the grotto.

Mr. Bishop suggests that Belardo's words might, in a given hypothesis, be interpreted "in the sense of three stone walls, and rock on the fourth, that is, eastern, side, only then," he adds, "we must say, he has taken, as these people sometimes do, an odd way of saying what he means." "Odd" is no name for it. Fancy a *cave scooped out of the rock with stone walls on three sides, and rock on the fourth side!* In the nature of things, a cave has rock on three sides; and if it is walled in on the fourth side, the wall must be masonwork. That "the cell of Our Lady" had such a wall in Belardo's time seems clearly implied in the words "inside eastwards *not built of stones.*" For this suggests a side that was built of stones, which, in the case of a cave, could only be the fourth side.

One is at loss to know what Mr. Bishop can mean by saying that Belardo's account is "full." This is the last word I should think of applying to it. It might be thought from the way Belardo speaks of the place that he found nothing there but a cave. Yet it is certain that the great Church of the Annunciation stood there; that the cave was in the crypt of the church; that two passage-ways led into the

cave; that a person who entered from the west had on his right the entrance to the cot where Jesus and Mary dwelt; that the bed on which Jesus slept was pointed out in this cot; that here also about 21 feet from the door of the grotto, was an altar to mark the spot where, according to the tradition of the place, Gabriel stood; that to the right of one who faced this altar was the room where Mary lived (Phocas); that on the left was a room, without a window, where Our Lord lived after the return from Egypt (Phocas); that the room where the altar was, and these two rooms, were in what was known as "the house of Joseph." These things we know with certainty because, by great good fortune, we have, from eye-witnesses, two independent accounts of the place that deserve, at least in a relative sense, to be called "full."

By "cell" Belardo means the cave which was "scooped out of the rock." In Daniel, on the other hand, the word "cell" means the abode of Jesus and Mary, into which "a small entrance" led from the cave. But both agree that the "cell" in which the Blessed Virgin was when the Angel came to her was the cave. At any rate, this seems the obvious meaning of Daniel's words, "in this same grotto, near the west door, is the place where the Blessed Virgin Mary was seated," for this "west door"

opened into the cave. Indeed the local tradition of Nazareth down to this day points to the cave as the place where the Blessed Virgin was at the moment of the annunciation. "Thus, wrote in 1890 Mgr. Le Camus, in the work already cited, "according to these good Fathers [the Franciscans at Nazareth], the Archangel Gabriel would have been in the miraculous house of Loreto, when he addressed his heavenly greeting to Mary, who herself was in the grotto that remains at Nazareth."

The next pilgrim who tells us anything worth noting about the sanctuary at Nazareth is John Phocas. His account¹ tallies with that of Daniel, and supplements it. Mr. Bishop finds him "wordy"—a failing that leans to virtue's side, seeing that what we have most to bemoan in these pilgrim-writers is paucity of words. Chevalier places Phocas's visit in 1177. Nazareth was still under Christian rule. The Greek pilgrim found a church dedicated to St. Gabriel, built over the public well, at the entrance to the town. He relates a first appearance of the Angel to the Virgin at this well, and her return to "the house of Joseph," where the Annunciation took place. "This same house of Joseph," he goes on to say, "was

¹ It is to be regretted that Chevalier does not give the Latin translation of it by Leo Allatius. He gives it in the original Greek, and to many of his readers Greek it still remains.

in course of time transformed into a beautiful church." To Chevalier these words are decisive of the point at issue. "It was transformed," he says: "it no longer existed, then," (p. 53). It existed, at any rate, the moment before it was transformed; you can't transform what doesn't exist—*Prius est esse quam esse tale!* What, then, did the transformation consist in? How was it wrought? Not, of course, by magic, nor by miracle. And, equally of course, those who wrought it possessed ordinary good sense, as well as reverence for so hallowed a monument. *Therefore they did not pull down the house*, in order to transform it. There is another saying of the Schoolmen which rules here: *Propter quod unum quodque, et illud magis*. Much more would the house continue to exist after the church was built, since it was for the sake of the house the church was built.

But this, it will be said, is to prove the continued existence of the house by the "high priori" way, as some wag has called it. Very well, then, we will now take the "low posteriori" way. And Phocas shall still be our guide. On the left of an altar, in this church, the Greek pilgrim saw a cave, not deep, but near the surface. He describes a bas-relief of the Annunciation over the entrance to this cave, and proceeds: "Entering by this mouth into

the cave, you descend a few steps, and then you see that same ancient house of Joseph, in which the Archangel, as I have said, announced the good tidings to the Virgin, on her return from the well."

The account thus far appears, at first sight, to contradict, in one point, that of Daniel. The Russian says the grotto was "small, but deep," while the Greek speaks of a cave "not deep under the ground, but opening near the surface." This, however, was not the grotto of the Annunciation, as is plain from Phocas's own account. "On entering by the mouth into the cave," he says, "you go down a few steps, etc." There are two caves in the holy place at Nazareth: a smaller one above, from which you descend by winding steps cut in the rock into the larger one, which is the grotto of the Annunciation. It will be remembered that Daniel speaks of two doors leading into the grotto, one on the east, the other on the west. Daniel himself entered by the west door, which was at the mouth of the grotto, in the south-west corner, and thus found himself at once on the same level as the dwelling (called by him the cell) of Jesus and Mary. John Phocas, on the other hand, entered by the east door, which opened into the upper cave, and so had to descend some steps to find the level of the lower

cave. He entered by the back of the grotto, from the north-east; Daniel entered by the mouth, from the southwest.¹

Let it be borne in mind now, that it was after going down the steps into the lower cave Phocas saw "the ancient house of Joseph." There, straight before him, was the north wall of the house, close up against the mouth of the cave; and he could see into the interior of it through "the little entrance" mentioned by Daniel. He was on the very scene of the Annunciation. It was there then in its unimpaired integrity. Now it is so no longer. *The scene is changed.* An integral part of it has been carried away, and from what remains at Nazareth is wide seas asunder.

You go down a few steps, and then you see that ancient house of Joseph. Momentous words these of our "wordy" pilgrim! Here is an eye-witness, and here his testimony: "The house was there; I saw it with my own eyes." At least this proof is *a posteriori*. And if there is any call for *a priori* strengthening of it, we have it in the philosophic principle cited by our author—*Prius est esse quam esse tale*. To be visible, a thing must be: a thing that was not, would not be visible.

But let us follow our pilgrim-guide a little

¹ See fig. 1.

further. "To resume, there is in the place of the Annunciation a cross of black stone cemented into white marble, and over it an altar, and on the right of this altar is shown a little room (*oikiskos*),¹ in which dwelt the Ever-Virgin Mother of God. On the left of [the place of] the annunciation is seen another chamber, without light, in which Christ our Lord is said to have lived, after the return from Egypt, till the beheading of the Precursor." The altar here described is known to the biographer of St. Louis of France, in 1251, as "the altar of the Annunciation." It marked, as we have learned more particularly from Daniel, the place where the Angel Gabriel stood. It was "three sachines," or 21 feet, from the door of the grotto, and therefore, as I have already pointed out, within the walls of the house. It follows that the rooms to the right and left of it, which were shown to these pilgrims as the ones occupied by Our Lord and His Blessed Mother, were in the house, as we should expect them to be. This is a point of capital importance. By and by, when we have come down to the latter half of the fifteenth century, I shall put another eye-witness on the stand, Suriano, to wit, with whose "details as to the

¹ The word means "a little house or room," but is properly rendered "room" here, because it was within "the house (*oikia*) of Joseph" already referred to.

grotto" Mr. Bishop¹ would have us believe those of Daniel and John Phocas to be in agreement, and who is ready to take his oath that the Blessed Virgin and St. Joseph (he will say nothing of Our Lord) lived in a cave, and that their dwelling could not be carried away without carrying the hill away with it. Verily, *the scene was changed*.

John of Wurzburg was in Nazareth a few year before Phocas. Chevalier cites a couple of passages from him, but fails to give the one that bears on the matter under discussion. It runs as follows: "[The Blessed Virgin] is said to have been born in the city of Nazareth, in the very room (*cubiculum*—bedchamber) where she was afterwards saluted by the Angel, and where she conceived of the Holy Ghost. This bedroom is shown there in a place by itself, as I saw with my own eyes when I was there." Without any doubt this is the little room (*oikiskos*) which Phocas describes as that in which the Ever-Virgin Mother of God always lived.² It was in and formed part of what the same Phocas calls "the house (*oikia*) of Joseph." We gather that it had a window

¹ *The Tablet*, Nov. 3, 1906, p. 684, col. 1.

² The word used by Phocas is "ethalameueto," from "thalamos" which properly means the room reserved for the woman of the house, and is equivalent to, though more specific than, the Latin "*cubiculum*."

from the fact that he tells us the room which was on the other side of the place where Gabriel stood, marked by the altar, and in which our Lord is said to have lived after the return from Egypt, was "without light."¹

I confidently leave the reader to say whether the testimonies of these three eye-witnesses, Daniel, John of Wurzburg, and John Phocas, do not clearly and fully establish the contradictory of Chevalier's assertion, which Father Thurston puts forward and makes himself sponsor for, viz., that, "So far as there was question at all in Nazareth of the abode in which the Blessed Virgin had lived, what was pointed out to pilgrims was a sort of natural cavern in the rock."

¹"Aphootistos."

VI.

The documents belonging to the period between 1177, the date of Phocas's visit, and 1291, the date assigned to the miraculous translation of the Holy House, throw but little fresh light on the point under discussion. A Pilgrim's Guide, "or Baedeker of its day" 1187, as Mr. Bishop calls it, states that in the place of the Annunciation, "is made a chapel in honour of Our Lady." To this, in 1231, is added the detail, "That is to say, in a grotto in the rock inside the church on the left hand."

Before quitting the Holy Land, St. Louis, King of France, paid, in 1251, a visit to Nazareth. His biographer tells us that the pious monarch "entered the holy place of the Incarnation," and that he heard Mass and received Holy Communion "at the altar of the Annunciation." In the French translation of the *Gesta sancti Ludovici*, by William of Nangis, express mention is made of the fact that this altar stood "where the Angel made the annunciation to the Virgin Mary," i. e., in the cottage, not in the cave as I have conclusively

shown from the combined testimonies of Daniel and John Phocas. Let the reader note this carefully, and thence gather that the description of the place of the Annunciation as "a grotto in the rock" ¹ is too brief to be adequate. That "place" included not only "the cell of Our Lady" (Belardo), i. e., the grotto proper, but also "the cell in which Jesus and Mary lived" (Daniel). And this was divided into three small apartments, in the middle one of which stood the altar of the Annunciation (Phocas).

In 1263, the venerable Church of the Annunciation was razed to the ground by order of the Sultan of Cairo. Pope Urban IV recounts this act of vandalism in a letter to St. Louis, which is still extant. "It is not of the humble cot of Mary that Urban speaks," observes Mr. Garrat, "but of the '*noble structure*' erected in its honour. What was grand and met the eye above ground, suffered wreck; but what was lowly and out of sight escaped. That magnificent cathedral might even have been levelled to the pavement without the crypt being the least affected." ² He instances how "the chapels of the Portiuncula [of St. Francis of 'Assisi] and of the death of the saint remained

¹ See citation from Pilgrim's Guide above.

² p. 215.

uninjured when the church built over them was destroyed by earthquake in 1832." But Chevalier, forgetting for the nonce that he had extracted from the testimony of Phocas a "decisive" proof that the cottage had ceased to exist long before this time, says the Saracens, in their hatred of the Christian name and religion, would have been sure to destroy it.¹ But they did not destroy it when they destroyed the city itself before the coming of the Crusaders. Besides, it was difficult to get at, and effectually screened from view, not only because it was under the pavement of the church, but because the entrance to it was from an underground cave hewed out of the rock, so that it itself, in the obscurity of the place, might easily be taken for a continuation of the cave. Most of the pilgrims appear to have taken it for part of the grotto.

The lowly cottage at Nazareth must, it seems, be got rid of at any cost. If the Saracens fail to lay unholy hands on it, Pope Urban will be made to say that nothing was left at Nazareth to lay unholy hands on. "There is in [Urban's] letter," says Chevalier "another decisive passage: '*infra cujus ambitum*,' he says, speaking of the church of Nazareth, '*Virgo virginum salutata per angelum de*

¹p. 54.

Spiritu sancto concepit'; the church contained, then, at the time, not the house, but the place where the Word was made flesh."¹ There is nothing in the passage quoted from Urban to warrant this inference. The Pope speaks by the card when he says it was "beneath the precincts" of the church the Blessed Virgin was greeted by Gabriel.² The place of the Incarnation was underneath the church, in the crypt, as all the pilgrims bear witness. In saying, therefore, "beneath the precincts," the Pope alludes to the underground chapel or crypt, and, as it were, tacitly refers us to other sources for further information. We have already seen that the only altar which is thus far known to have been in that underground chapel was 21 feet from the door of the cave, and therefore within the walls of "the ancient house of Joseph," as both John Phocas and Daniel attest. A subtle fallacy lurks in Chevalier's phrase, "not the house, but the place," for the "place" was enclosed partly by the walls of the house and partly by the sides of the cave.

The place was visited about 1283 by the Dominican Burchard of Mount Sion. "In Nazareth," he writes, "still remains the place (*hodie*

¹ loc. cit

² Even Garrat seems to have taken "*infra*" for "*intra*." He makes "*infra cujus ambitum*" "*within whose precincts*" (p. 214).

permanens locus) where the Angel Gabriel brought the life-giving message to the Blessed Virgin, saying *Hail, full of grace*. . . . I said Mass several times in that place. . . . There are three altars in the chapel, which is hewn out of the rock in stone (*excisa de rupe in petra*), like the place of the Nativity, Passion and Resurrection. Indeed a great part of the town [*civitas*'—ancient city] of Nazareth was hewn out of the rock [i. e., consisted of grottos, natural or artificial], as is yet apparent" (p. 48). It will be noticed that he speaks of the place of the Annunciation as "still remaining," a phrase which implies that more than the site of the house was there, for the site remains always. The place of the Annunciation included cave and cottage, both together forming the crypt of the church. In the dim light, the whole "place" looked as if it had been "hewn out of the rock," the more so that the walls of the cottage were covered with plaster.¹

Like all the pilgrims before 1291, with two notable exceptions, Burchard is sparing of details. He takes a great deal for granted as being already known, or easily obtainable from books. Thus, without a word of preface, he speaks of "the chapel"; for the Pilgrim's

¹ "The stone walls are covered with plaster, of which very little remains in the *Santa Casa*" (Garrat, p. 412), the greater part having been picked off by pilgrims (Ib.)

Guide, cited above, gave the needful gloss, that the place of the Annunciation had been "made a chapel in honour of Our Lady." One detail he gives which is given by no other up to this time. He tells us there were three altars in the chapel. One of these altars, that of the Annunciation, we know to have been in the house. Where were the other two? Most likely in the cave; for here, according to the ancient local tradition, was the place where Mary was seated when the Angel saluted her; also, the tomb of Joseph. The place where the Angel stood, marked by the altar of the Annunciation, was in the house. Nor was there in the house any other well-defined spot of sacred and historic character to be marked by an altar.

Burchard was followed, in 1289, by Ricoldo of Monte di Croce, a Dominican friar. Chevalier places his visit to Nazareth in 1294, and says "he saw at Nazareth the chamber of the Annunciation the very year (1294) in which it is supposed to have made its appearance in the Marches," i. e., in Loreto. But Eschbach and Rinieri show conclusively that Chevalier assigns a false date to Ricoldo's visit. It is plain from Ricoldo's own writings that his visit to Nazareth was made before the fall of Acre in 1291. This pilgrim, as he tells us himself, "found the great church almost wholly de-

stroyed," and "nothing there of the former buildings save only the cell in which Our Lady received the angelic salutation (*nisi sola cella, ubi annunciata fuit domina.*" He adds, as Mr. Bishop tersely renders the Latin: "There is an altar of Our Lady on the spot where she was praying, and an altar of the Archangel Michael where stood Gabriel. We said Mass on both."

It is easy here to score a dialectic triumph over Canon Chevalier. For if Ricoldo saw at Nazareth the chamber of the Annunciation, or Holy House, and if, or rather since he saw it, not "the very year (1294) in which it is said to have made its appearance" in Loreto, but five years earlier than that date, it follows that the Holy House was seen at Nazareth just two years before the traditional date of its miraculous translation thence—which is the precise contradictory of the thesis that the Canon tries to prove in the first part of his book. But having shown by the testimonies of independent eye-witnesses that the House was in Nazareth in the 12th century, I do not set great store by this easy victory. I cannot, however, but beg the reader to note how ready Chevalier is to affirm that Ricoldo saw the House in Nazareth in 1294, whereas he scorns with his heels the very notion that Daniel, or

John of Wurzburg, or John Phocas saw it there the century before—though, of course, if it was not there and if they did not see it, neither could Ricoldo have seen it! I say “scorns with his heels,” which is not putting it too strongly, for on the preceding page (54) he goes so far as to say that his opponents, the defenders of the old tradition, are subject to “an illusion which makes them see in the texts what they have an interest in seeing there.”

As has been already observed, “cell” in the itineraries is a word of variable import. In that of Belardo, it means the cave; in that of Daniel, it means the cottage. What does Ricoldo mean by it? It is not easy to know for certain. But Rinieri very plausibly gathers from a word he uses that he means the cottage. He says of the “cell” that “the Lord saved it [or kept from perishing—*superreseravit*] for a memorial of lowliness and poverty.” Now any special providence of God to keep from perishing a grotto scooped out of the rock would seem superfluous. On the other hand, Ricoldo would appear to point to the grotto when he says there was an altar of our Lady in the place where she was praying; for the tradition which Daniel found in Nazareth, as we have seen, represented the Blessed Virgin as being in the grotto when the Angel came. We must

remember, however, that it is more than doubtful whether there was any one in Nazareth at the time of Ricoldo's visit who knew with any degree of exactness the old traditions of the place.

Besides the altar of Our Lady there was in the chapel, says Ricoldo, "an altar of the Archangel Michael where Gabriel stood." The altar which marked the spot where Gabriel stood was seen by Daniel and John Phocas in the cottage. In 1251, thirty-eight years before the time of Ricoldo's visit, it was known as "the altar of the Annunciation." That there should have been "an altar of the Archangel Michael where stood Gabriel" seems hardly credible. Ricoldo's statement is in discord with the ancient tradition of the place. There was about this time, as we shall see more fully later on, a complete break in the continuity of the ancient local tradition so far as regards especially the precise place where the Angel stood, its distance from that where Our Lady was, and the standing memorials that served to mark these places. Of this there were two contributing causes. One was, as we believe, the removal of an integral part of the scene, the cottage, namely. The other was the expulsion from Nazareth of those who handed on the tradition. A treaty concluded

on June 3, 1283, with the Sultan of Egypt, left the ruined church of Nazareth in the hands of the Christians, but its provisions were not long respected. By 1289 Nazareth had passed completely into infidel hands, and the abomination of desolation settled down in the holy place. "All those places of Galilee from first to last," are the closing words of Ricoldo's own account, "we found in undisturbed possession of the Saracens (*in possessione Saracenorum pacifice et quiete*)." We conclude, therefore, that finding two altars in the underground chapel, this Florentine pilgrim set himself unaided to determine their topographic significance.

VII.

We will pause for a moment at this stage to inquire how Canon Chevalier and Mr. Bishop succeeded in persuading themselves that there was nothing in the holy place at Nazareth, hundreds of years before the date assigned for the miraculous removal of the Holy House, but a grotto "scooped out of the rock." Most of the pilgrims make explicit mention only of the grotto. Two and two only, the Abbot Daniel and John Phocas, give definite data whence the existence of the house can with certainty be known. Now the Canon and his English reviewer manage to shut out the evidence of these two witnesses. But each has his own way of doing this. Chevalier frees himself from the necessity of at all considering Daniel's testimony by making it refer to a "house of Joseph" which is said to have been "in the middle of the city." As for the testimony of Phocas, which he, too, finds "prolix," he sets out by saying that "too much importance has perhaps been attached to it," and that "it can with difficulty be reconciled with what we

know from other sources" (p. 37). Then, in seeming forgetfulness of what he had said, he cites it (p. 53) as "decisive" of the point at issue, because, forsooth, Phocas says "the house of Joseph was transformed into a beautiful church." In vain does Phocas himself explain what he meant by these words, saying that he saw "the ancient house of Joseph" in the crypt of that "beautiful church," and saw in the house the altar of the Annunciation, and the rooms occupied by Our Lord and His Blessed Mother. Chevalier's "It was transformed: therefore it no longer existed" settles the question; for how could Phocas have seen what that destructive enthymeme had transformed out of existence!

Mr. Bishop keeps more closely to the letter of his texts. But he misses their meaning. First he groups his witnesses, partly by nationality and partly by religion, into "Greek" and "Latin," and then he plays the latter group off against the former. "Substantially, therefore," he writes, "abbot Daniel and John Phocas give the same account, and their details as to the grotto agree (as will be seen later) with those of the Latin pilgrims of the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries [How far this is from the truth I have already indicated, and we shall also see more fully later]. But these two

writers differ from the western accounts in two points: (1) they represent the grotto of the Annunciation as being underneath the church in the centre of the town; and (2) say that this grotto was the House of Joseph. How are these statements to be accounted for? By a lapse of memory in both cases? Were both confused in their recollection of places and what they saw? Or is the root of the discrepancy to be found in two traditional but differing readings of the Gospel story, one assuming the Annunciation before, the other after, the Blessed Virgin went to live with Joseph? By his assertion that the church over the grotto he describes was dedicated in honour of the Annunciation, Daniel seems unmistakably to point the way to his own and Phocas's correction. But it is not my concern here to inquire further or to attempt a harmony of the two sets of accounts. It is my business, however, to call attention to the fact that up to A. D. 1300 the only Holy House known to record is described as an underground grotto, or cell, scooped out of the rock.”¹

One would gather from this statement that John Phocas as well as Daniel says the grotto of the Annunciation was “in the middle of the

¹ *The Tablet*, Nov. 3, 1906. The “Latin” pilgrims so describe it.

village." In matter of fact, Phocas says never a word about the situation of the grotto. But Daniel does; Daniel is a "Greek"; John Phocas, too, is a "Greek"; therefore he, too, would have said it, if he had but thought of it! These seem to have been the steps by which Mr. Bishop reached the conclusion that both say what only one of them says. Happily we have been able to clear up the situation by showing that Daniel's phrase "in the middle of the village," describes, from a different point of view, the same spot as does that of his contemporary, Belardo, "on one side of the city." But I must protest against a method of classifying witnesses, which, however interesting in an ethnological or religious sense, is mischievous in the only sense that concerns one who is wishful to get at the truth. In a witness the only things that really matter are these two: (1) Is he trustworthy? (2) What can he tell us about the matter? If the witnesses who tell most about the matter happen to be "Greeks", their testimony should not be set aside for that, and the decision of the question made to turn on mere scraps of information furnished by men who happen to be "Latins."

The real difference between the two sets of accounts is that the "Latin" ones are pitifully meagre, while the "Greek" ones are

relatively rich in details. It is simply a difference of less and more. Thus, what the Latin pilgrims call "the cell of our Lady," i. e., the cave, was but part of the "grotto", or crypt, including cave and cottage, called by the Greek pilgrims "the house of Joseph," in which, as one of them (Daniel) tells us "all took place." For the whole scene of the Annunciation comprised the cave, where Our Lady was seated, and the cottage, where Gabriel stood. One only of the Latin pilgrims, the first to tell us anything about the place, speaks of the cottage as "the Blessed Mary's house," which it could well have been without ceasing to be Joseph's, for were they not husband and wife? Besides, we may find in the words of this pilgrim an echo of the ancient tradition which says the house was Mary's by inheritance.

Mr. Bishop's suggestions by way of accounting for the seeming discrepancies between the two sets of accounts are therefore beside the mark. There was no lapse of memory or confusion of thought on the part of the Greek pilgrims. Nor was the traditional reading of the Gospel story different in the East from what it was in the West. Mr. Bishop implies that the Latins assumed the Annunciation before the Blessed Virgin went to live with

Joseph. It is not by any means clear that the Latin pilgrims do assume this. In any case, such an assumption would not rest on a traditional reading of the Gospel story differing from the Eastern one, for the Latin Fathers in the fourth century, Jerome, Ambrose, Augustine, hold that the Blessed Virgin was the wedded wife of Joseph before the Annunciation.¹

A word about Chevalier's work as a critic, so far as it has yet been revealed. He is a great hand at cataloguing and counting. He has the documents from the first centuries down to 1291 numbered, and he reckons up how many times the word "house" is found in them, and how many times the word "place."

¹ St. Ambrose teaches this plainly in *In Lucam*, lib. 2, nn. 1-5 (P. L. Tom. xv.). St. Augustine (*Contra Julian*, lib. 5, n. 47) only implies it, but very clearly. St. Jerome (*D. Perpet. Virg. B. Mariae*, n. 4), at first blush, seems to teach the very opposite, but later on opens his mind more fully on the subject, where he gives as one reason why the Blessed Virgin was espoused to Joseph that she might have the solace of his companionship in the flight to Egypt, the companionship "of a guardian rather than husband—*custodis potius quam mariti*." Whence we infer that when St. Jerome says Joseph was not the husband of Mary, as he does elsewhere, he takes the word "husband" in the sense of a man who has consummated his marriage. So also St. Hilary (*In Matt.* c. 1) openly denies that Mary was the wife of Joseph ("non uxor Joseph est nuncupata [Luke ii, 33], quia non erat"). But that he takes "wife" in a sense similar to that in which Jerome takes "husband," is shown by his saying, two or three sentences after, that she "passed for a wife after the birth" of her Son, though all are agreed that she was the wedded wife of Joseph before the birth.

All this is very well, indeed, in its way, and helpful. It is quite scientific, too, yet is but very elementary work in science. The tyro in any science can classify and count. In the special work of the critic's craft, in the interpretation of documents, in the harmonizing of seemingly conflicting details, in the weighing and sifting of evidence, in the ability to put this and that together and read the meaning of a text in the light of the whole context, Canon Chevalier quite fails to measure up to the high reputation which he enjoys.

VIII.

I have said that there was, after 1291, a complete break in the continuity of the local tradition at Nazareth regarding (1) the place where Gabriel stood, (2) its distance from the place where Our Lady was, and (3) the monuments that served to mark these places. Let the reader call to mind again that an altar known as the altar of the Annunciation is said, before 1291, to have marked the place where the Angel stood; that this altar is said to have been 21 feet from the door of the grotto; that the place of the altar is said to have been flanked by two little rooms, one on the right the other on the left of it; and that both the place where the altar was and these two little rooms (*oikiskoi*) are said to have been in the house (*oikia*). Of all this no single trace is left after 1291. All the pilgrims who visited Nazareth in the next two hundred years agree in saying that the grotto alone remained, much as their accounts vary in minor details.

Mixed up with excerpts from the itineraries of these pilgrims, in Chevalier's book, are to be

found citations from writers who got their information at second hand. This, at times, gives rise to confusion. Thus, Sanutus Torsellus, in a work written about 1321, tells us that "In Nazareth the place is shown where the Angel Gabriel" saluted Our Lady, and then goes on to state that "in the chapel there built *were* three altars, and the chapel *was* hewn out of the rock in stone, etc.," all of which is simply copied, with a change of tense, from the work of Burchard of Mount Sion (1284) already cited.¹ The same passage is copied again by Bernard of Briedenback, in 1483, and by Nicholas Le Huen, in 1487, but without change of tense, thus: "There *are* three altars in the chapel, etc." ¹

The first eye-witness to describe the place, after Ricoldo, is William of Boldensel (1332-36). "Here," he writes, "there was a large and beautiful church, but (alas) it is almost destroyed. There is in it, nevertheless, a little place covered over, which is carefully guarded

¹ "Four years later, A. D. 1300, Franciscan Fathers took up their abode at Nazareth and built a chapel on the site of the Holy House. They also erected *three altars* for the celebration of the Holy Mass."—*Loreto: The New Nazareth*, p. 216. Mr. Garrat gives Sanutus Torsellus as his authority, evidently taking his account to be original. In the itineraries of the pilgrims, during the period under review, there is nothing to indicate the existence of a chapel on the spot, other than the grotto itself. And it was *before* 1291 the *three altars* were there.

by the Saracens; where near a certain marble column they say the venerable mysteries of the Divine Conception were accomplished.”¹ It is evident that, at this time, the place was in the exclusive keeping of the Saracens. It was they who took upon themselves to fix, and point out to pilgrims, the precise spot where the mystery of the Incarnation was enacted. It is not an altar but a column that from this time onward serves to mark the place of the Annunciation: all trace of the ancient local tradition on this point is clean swept away.

Ludolf of Sudheim (1336–41) states that, in the church of Nazareth, “near the choir is a very fine chapel,” where the Annunciation took place, “and in this church also stands a small column, over against which stood the Angel Gabriel when he announced Christ.” Next, we have, in 1345, from Niccolo di Poggibonsi, a more detailed account. “The city,” he writes, “is mostly in ruins, and has no walls. At the entrance we are made to pay twelve francs (*drame*) a head. Within is a beautiful church in the very place where the house (*casa*) of Our Lady was when she was greeted by the Angel;

¹ Mr. Bishop (*The Tablet*, Nov. 3, p. 684) takes the “little place covered over” to mean “the Saracens’ hut.” But the grotto answers the description; and we know from other pilgrims that the foot of the column was in the grotto though the top extended some few feet beyond the pavement of the church.

but the church is now in ruins, except the chamber (*camera*) of Our Lady. This chamber is very small, and adorned with mosaics; and the house (*casa*) abutted against a grotto of rock. Within is the column which the Blessed Mary clasped in fear when the Angel made the annunciation. This column is as big as a man can put his arms about. At the foot of the column is a bit of wall, where she used to pray. On one side (or beside it—*da lato*) is a little altar, raised above the level of the grotto;¹ and above the column there is a large opening (*finestra*) through which the Angel entered.”

On this very important testimony Chevalier, characteristically, has not a word of comment. And yet it goes to show two things that are of vital moment. One is that the house was in Nazareth before Poggibonsi visited the place; “and the house abutted against the grotto of rock” are his words. The other is that the house was no longer there at the time of Poggibonsi’s visit; for he speaks of it in the past tense, and distinguishes it sharply from the “camera” or room of Our Lady, by which we know he means the grotto from the fact that he says the column which she is said to

¹ “di sopra alla grotta.” Mr. Bishop translates this, “at the far end of the grotto.” It seems rather to signify that the altar rested on a dais, above the floor of the grotto.

have clasped in affright was "within." I myself saw that same column in the same grotto at Nazareth.

There appears to have been but one altar in the grotto at this time. The marble column (before the end of the next century two columns are mentioned) was most likely one of those in the nave of the church, which the Saracens, it would seem, fixed in the grotto to mark the place of the Annunciation. The picturesque detail as to the large opening or window through which the Angel came, may also, with a high degree of probability, be traced to the Saracens. There is not the faintest hint of the existence of such things before 1291. With the passing away of the house and of the old guardians of the place, there passed also the old traditions and the old memorials. In Daniel's time, Our Lady was said to have been seated, in the act of spinning, when the Angel entered; now she is said to have clasped a marble column in affright—a silly invention.

The description given of the place by pilgrims for the next hundred years and more, adds little to what we already know. But in 1425 Bartolomeo Rustici expressly identifies "the chamber of Our Lady" with the grotto, saying that "it is all adorned with mosaics and hidden—*cacciata*; "thrust," is the word he uses—

within a rock," and that "there is in the chamber a column which Mary clasped in affright when the Angel saluted her." He gives its dimensions as "eight feet long and seven broad." It is singular that no two of the pilgrims agree in the measurements they give of the grotto. We must add that Rustici, too, mentions but one altar. "In the chamber," are his words, "there is an altar."

Francesco Suriano, a Franciscan, was missionary in the East from 1481 to 1484. Some time within that period he visited Nazareth. Mr. Bishop speaks of him as "an important witness," and Chevalier lays particular stress on "the extreme importance of his testimony." Its importance lies in this, that Suriano openly avows his disbelief in the miraculous translation of the Holy House. But here is the account, as done into English by Mr. Bishop:

"Some have said that the Virgin Mary was born in Nazareth. . . . The house in which she dwelt and in which the Annunciation took place, some have falsely asserted to be St. Mary of Loreto, which is built of small square stones or bricks and roofed with tiles (*copi*), and in this country (Nazareth) such things are not to be found. But the true house of the Blessed Virgin is dug out in the hill (*e carata nel monte*) which is of tufa [a species of limestone]; it is

underground, and about sixteen *braza* square, with two little chambers [Mr. Bishop here inserts, 'cf. John Phocas'], one by the side of the other, in one of which lived Joseph and in the other the Blessed Virgin. And that same house which was at the time when the Annunciation took place is the same one as at present. Nor could it be carried away nor lifted unless the hill were taken along with it. . . . In the house are two columns of porphyry *le quale passano di sopra la chiesa* [which pass beyond (the pavement of) the church], one where stood the angel, the other the Blessed Virgin, two and a half *braza* apart."

The last statement, by itself, enables us to gauge the value of Suriano's testimony. The two columns (he is himself the first to mention two) do not appear to have been in the grotto at all before 1291. And the only thing that is certain about them is that it is quite uncertain by whom they were placed there, or when, or why. It will be noticed that he speaks of the grotto, or cave, as the house, "the true house," of the Blessed Virgin. The pilgrims who were in Nazareth before him, keeping to the ancient tradition of the place, describe it as the "cell," or the "chamber," where the Blessed Virgin was when she received the annunciation. Nor does it appear that the grotto contained "two

little chambers, one by the side of the other," before Suriano's own time. At any rate, he is the first to mention this. But how could he have known that they were there from the first? And where did he come by the odd piece of information that the dwelling of the Holy Family in Nazareth was a cave "dug out in the hill"? And if this cave contained but two little chambers, in one of which lived St. Joseph, and in the other the Blessed Virgin, where did Our Lord live? All that Suriano says about the past of the grotto, and the uses to which it was put, is said out of his own head. He had absolutely no means of knowing anything about the matter, though he speaks with the air of one who knew all about it. Even the things that he might have known, on careful inquiry, he doesn't know. He says the Holy House at Loreto is made of *quadrelli o matoni*, that is, of bricks, as the context shows, the latter word serving but to define more clearly the meaning of the former. There is plenty of stone suitable for building in Nazareth, but brick is not used there. Now, as a matter of fact, the walls of the *Santa Casa* at Loreto are not made of bricks but of stones somewhat of the same size and shape as brick, but rudely wrought and not of uniform thickness. Also, the stones of which it is built are

a species of limestone not found in Italy but of a kind with that which abounds in Nazareth, as was shown by scientific analysis made at Rome in 1857, and the present writer verified by personal examination. As for the *copi* or tiles which cover the roof, these were put on since the removal of the House into Italy.

Suriano gives the size of the grotto as "sixteen *braza* square." What the exact length of the "*braza*" was we have no means of knowing. From the context we should judge it to have been about a foot. He tells us the two columns were "two and a half *braza* apart," and the distance between them is variously estimated by the other pilgrims at between two and four feet; "about four feet," says John Van Kootwick (1598); "an arm's length, or a little more," (Stephand Montegazza, about 1600); "scarce three *palmi*," i. e., anywhere between 2 and 2½ feet (Esprit Julien, about 1640); "2½ feet" (Elzear Horn, about 1720); "only three feet" (Garrat, p. 425). These columns were supposed to mark the respective places of the Virgin and of the Angel Gabriel.

Here is one detail as to which Suriano and the pilgrims that followed him disagree with Daniel and John Phocas, or rather with the former of the two, for the latter gives us no measurements. It is a detail of little con-

sequence in itself, but of vast consequence in its bearing on the point at issue. Daniel tells us that Our Lady was seated near the west door of the grotto, and that there were "21 feet from the door to the place where Gabriel was." Even if we suppose Our Lady to have been half the width of the grotto from the door, the Angel would have been some twelve or thirteen feet from her. A second detail as to which there is disagreement is the memorial that marked the place of the Angel. In the one case, it is "the altar of the Annunciation;" in the other, it is a marble column which showed "above the ruins of the church, considerably more than the height of a man" (Luigi Vulcano, 1563). A third detail is the number of altars. In 1283, there were three altars (Burchard); in 1289, two (Ricoldo); in 1345, one (Poggibonsi); in 1425, one (Rustici). In 1533, three altars are again mentioned by a pilgrim (Arfagart). But two may well have been added in the interval to accommodate the increasing number of pilgrim priests who wished to say Mass there. And in any case, it is "with the Latin pilgrims of the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries" that the abbot Daniel and John Phocas are said to agree in "their details as to the grotto."

But where is the need of discussing details when the two sets of accounts differ as to the

very core of the matter in dispute? To repeat once more what has now so often been gone over, Daniel says that the altar which marked the place of the Angel was 21 feet from the door of the grotto; that there was "a little entrance" from the grotto into this place; and that here was the dwelling-place of Jesus and Mary. John Phocas confirms his account; says he saw "the ancient house of Joseph," saw the altar there, and saw the two little rooms, to the left and right, where Jesus and Mary dwelt. On the other hand, the pilgrims of the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries are clear that there was nothing left but the grotto or cave "hewn out in the rock"—no entrance or door opening from it into the dwelling-place of Jesus and Mary, no altar of the Annunciation flanked by the rooms in which they dwelt. True, Suriano says he found two little rooms (*stantiolette*) in the underground place. But they were "the one by the side of the other (*l'una accanto l'altra*)," with no space between them for an altar, and *they were in the cave*—not in a place which communicated with the cave through "a little entrance." He says the Blessed Virgin lived in one of these rooms, St. Joseph in the other, and has no room for our Blessed Lord. I prefer the account of the earlier pilgrims, backed by the tradition of the Universal

Church, which assumes a house, not a cave, as the dwelling-place of the Holy Family, and assigns to Our Lord a room in this house, "after the return from Egypt" (Phocas),—doubtless the room occupied before that time by St. Joseph, who would himself have withdrawn to the cave. The compelling force of universal tradition makes Suriano call this cave a "house," but a cave is a cave, even if you call it a palace.

The main reason Chevalier gives for the "extreme importance" of Suriano's account is that it "makes its appearance precisely at the time when the legend of the (miraculous) translation is beginning to spread" p. 70). Later on (p. 321), he speaks of the "legend" as coming into existence (*naissante*) in Suriano's time; and again (p. 326) affirms that it "is not anterior to 1472, the date of its first appearance." The word "legend" may mean a narrative that has some foundation in fact, or it may mean a narrative that is wholly without such foundation. In either case it is based on oral tradition, and may, and often does, exist for hundreds of years before it is put in writing—if it ever is put in writing. Chevalier's words convey the impression that the "legend," which I prefer to call the "tradition," about the Holy House did not at all exist before

1472. What he should have stated, if he had expressed himself with that precision which we have a right to look for in a critic of his standing, is that the "legend" was embodied, in 1472 for the first time, in a document of which authentic copies without number are still extant. That document was drawn up by Teremanus, who is therefore known as the first historian of the Holy House. After relating how sixteen men, sent from Recanati to Nazareth in 1296, reported upon their return that they found in the holy place of the Annunciation the foundations of a house, the measurements of which were exactly the same as those of the house of Loreto, Teremanus adds: "And ever since then it has been known that this Church was the Dwelling of the Holy Virgin Mary." From this let the reader judge how false is the impression conveyed by Chevalier's words: "The legend is not anterior to 1472, the date of its first appearance;" and again, "[it] was just beginning to spread" when (in 1485) Suriano's account appeared.

Chevalier himself furnishes us with a means of testing the truth of his statement. At page 236, he cites the following dialogue between Suriano and his sister:

Sister. I wonder that you should say the chapel is in the place where the Virgin was saluted by the Angel,

when everybody believes that it came away from those lands in a miraculous manner, and crossed the sea, and came to Ancona, and to the present day is known as St. Mary of Loreto, celebrated beyond all other shrines by reason of the miracles wrought there—*preclarissima et eccellente in fare miracoli*.

Brother. I have heard the same account before. But it does not stand to reason, though God can do greater things. It is shown to be false by the fact that the house in which Joseph and the Virgin Mary lived was hewn out in the rock that is called *tufa*, because of their poverty.

This was written in the latter half of the 15th century. Chevalier says the “legend” was then in its infancy. But Suriano makes his sister say that “everybody believes” St. Mary of Loreto to be the House in which the Holy Family dwelt at Nazareth. Of course the statement is somewhat of an exaggeration. Suriano himself, for one, did not believe. But it is simply the exaggeration of common speech, and it implies that the belief was general at that time. Now a widespread persuasion such as this does not grow up in a night. It follows that the “legend” instead of being in its infancy, had already attained a ripe growth.

The same may also be gathered from another expression that Suriano puts in his sister’s mouth: “Down to this day (*sino al presente*) it is known as St. Mary of Loreto.” This implies the existence of a tradition, even then, identify-

ing St. Mary of Loreto with the Holy House of Nazareth. People do not say "down to this day" of that which is of yesterday, but only of that which has its roots in a past that is at least relatively remote.

Take, again, the way Suriano tries to discredit the general belief. If the "legend" really had been in its infancy, struggling for mere life, he could easily have strangled it. Suppose, as the opponents of the tradition assume, St. Mary of Loreto was an old parish church, about which this legend was beginning to twine itself, what more easy than to furnish the proofs of this, then and there? Instead, Suriano falls back on the impossibility of the thing in itself. The "house" at Nazareth, he argues, was hewn out in the rock, and could not have been carried off unless the hill were taken along with it.

Had Suriano, while he was at Nazareth, examined carefully the place in front of the cave, he would have seen, as later pilgrims saw, the foundations of a house there. And had he made diligent inquiry at Loreto, he would have ascertained the shrine there to be a house without its foundations. And had he taken measurements of the foundations at Nazareth and of the house at Loreto, as has been done several times since, he would have found that

they corresponded exactly. And had he tested the stone at Nazareth and the mortar used in building there, and compared them with the stone and mortar of the Holy House, as has also been done since, he could not have failed to be struck by the sameness of the material. And had he glanced at the frescoes, which then stood out clearly on the walls of the House,¹ and now once more have been brought out distinctly, he would have seen, among the forms of saints greatly honoured in the East, the figure of St. Louis of France, arrayed in royal robes, and hanging from his right hand the chains of his captivity at Mansourah before his pilgrimage to the House of Nazareth.² And had he applied his senses to the woodwork, all of cedar—the lintel of the ancient doorway, the shelf of the cupboard hollowed out in the north wall, the remains of an ancient partition, the pieces of the ancient wood placed beneath the altar by order of Pope Clement VII.—, the sight or perhaps the fragrance of it would have called up before him a far-off village of Galilee, nestling among the southern ridges of Lebanon, where the lords of the forest reared their lofty heads. But Suriano did none of these things.

¹ In 1637, "Silvius Serragle of Pietra Santa put engravings of them in his work entitled *The Holy House Embellished*,"—*Loreto: The New Nazareth*, p. 36.

² *Ib.*

And instead of being guided by tradition, and by common sense, he persuaded himself that, since *he* saw no dwelling but a cave in the holy place at Nazareth, there was none else ever there to be seen, and that this was "the true house of the Blessed Virgin." He forged his account, so far as it bore on the past, in the workshop of his individual fancy, with the inevitable result that it rings false.

Yes, I quite agree with Mr. Bishop and Canon Chevalier that the testimony of this witness is important—as a foil to set the truth of ancient tradition in brighter relief.

X.

In the quest of facts about the holy place at Nazareth we have followed in the footsteps of the pilgrims down to the year 1500. I have made it a point throughout to go by what those eye-witnesses themselves told us, and to admit outside or second-hand testimony only in so far as it tallied, or rather in so far as it did not conflict, with theirs. In the case of the pilgrims themselves, I have sought to separate the wheat from the chaff. I have distinguished carefully between what they witnessed, or at least could have witnessed, themselves, and what they had from others; and here, between the living traditions of the place before 1291, while the Christians were still in charge of it, and the legends, mostly childish and absurd, that grew up in the place after it fell into the hands of the Saracens. We will now, for a space, quit the holy place in Galilee to follow another pilgrimage to a new Nazareth on the shores of the Adriatic—a pilgrimage slender in its beginnings but swelling into huge proportions as the centuries rolled on.

104 THE HOLY HOUSE OF LORETO.

I have already laid the foundation on which we are now going to build. It is this: THE HOUSE OF THE HOLY FAMILY, WHICH WAS IN NAZARETH BEFORE 1291, DISAPPEARED FROM NAZARETH ABOUT THAT TIME. The tradition that we are upholding has it that this same House was carried by angels from Nazareth to Tersatto and thence to Loreto, where it found its final resting-place in 1295. I say "tradition," not "legend," (1) because the account, though marvellous, is not incredible, and can not be set aside as absurd by any one who believes in Divine Providence and in the ministry of angels; (2) because it had its origin in a highly civilized Christian community, and was handed on with the full knowledge and approval of the Bishops of Recanati, whose strict duty would have been to prevent it from gaining a foothold among their people had it been purely legendary; (3) because it is attested by the miracles without number wrought in the Holy House—the last place on earth where God would have worked a miracle had the tradition been begotten in fraud and falsehood; (4) because, on due investigation, it was accepted as authentic by the Vicars of Christ. A tradition such as this has a claim to serious consideration, especially at the hands of Catholics. It is

not the mark of a wise and enlightened mind to wave it hastily away or loftily dismiss it as a legend.

All around Loreto, observes Garrat, there are ancient towns, whose inhabitants are mostly descended from those who lived there in the thirteenth century, and there are the castles of many noble families whose ancestors were contemporary with the Translation of the Holy House. "We have heard it related," they say, "by our fathers; and it has been handed down in our family from father to son, ever since the event occurred. Going back thus from age to age, till the arrival of the Sacred dwelling, we find that the account of the miracle has been always received in every generation as an acknowledged fact. It was not wrought in distant lands and among a barbarous people; but in this country, which was then the most civilized in Europe, and in the very presence of our ancestors. An event so portentous could not have happened without their verifying it, neither could it have been fabricated without their rising up to deny it."

The Holy House of Loreto was commonly known, until the end of the 15th century, as the "Church of St. Mary of Loreto," or more

briefly as "St. Mary of Loreto." Teremanus, in the opening words of his account, uses the former title: Suriano, as we have seen, employs the latter. It may seem strange that a house, and particularly a little cottage, measuring only 31 feet by 13 internally, should be spoken of as a "church." But strange or not strange, such is the fact. And, after all, it is a fact that is easily accounted for. The *Santa Casa* was no longer a dwelling; it was become a place of worship, a shrine, a place of pilgrimage, as at Nazareth so at Loreto, with this difference that there it formed, with the contiguous cave, the crypt of a basilica, while here it stood for a time by itself, till a church was built round it. It was no doubt during the time it stood by itself that it became known as the "Church of St. Mary of Loreto" or simply as "St. Mary of Loreto."

I have said that the Holy House was a place of pilgrimage, as at Nazareth so at Loreto. How far back, then, does the Lauretan pilgrimage date? This is a question that has a vital bearing on the point at issue. If it is true, as the tradition affirms, that the Holy House was transferred to Loreto toward the close of the thirteenth century, we should expect to find some trace of the pilgrimage thither shortly after that time. And this we do find,

as a matter of fact. I quote Mr. Bishop's account:

“The first glimpse we get of the pilgrimage and sanctuary is in the record of a sentence passed October 23, 1315, by the judge-general of the March of Ancona on four persons who (it is said) with a company of armed men and in malice prepense in the months of August and September and several times in those months, and in the months of February and March of the following year and on all feasts and in the octaves of the Blessed Virgin thenceforward till now, had violently entered the church of St. Mary de Laureto and against the will of the chaplain placed there by the bishop to collect the offerings, had carried off all the money that was in the ‘trunk’ of the said church, taken from off the altar all the offerings, torches, and candles, and images of wax and silver, and stripped the image of the Blessed Virgin with the image of Our Lord in her arms of all the silver garlands (*guillandras*) with pearls and without pearls, and the curtains and hangings of silk, etc.; and finally had made themselves masters of the church (and of course of the profits arising from the pilgrimage) to the no slight loss of the bishop (pp. 156, 157).—*The Tablet*, Nov. 10, p. 723. Mr. Bishop adds: “The Papal registers contain a

record of these troubles in the shape of four bulls of Pope John XXII. dated December 20, 1320, in favour of the chaplain or rector who had been 'despoiled (as he told the Pope) by certain tyrants of those parts' (pp. 485-487)." This last statement involves a serious blunder, due no doubt to Mr. Bishop's having made but a hasty, and therefore superficial, survey of the documents in question. Pope John XXII. deals with an altogether different matter, as we shall see by and by.

"I'll blows the wind that profits nobody," says the proverb. Only for the pilferings of this lawless band of Ghibellins (for such they were), we should have no documentary evidence of the pilgrimage till toward the close of the fourteenth century. And of course our critics, true to their method but false to fact, would have said that there was no pilgrimage till then; just as they say that the "legend" of the miraculous translation was not anterior to 1472, because that is the date of the first extant document to contain it. Never before was such undue stress laid on "the negative argument" as there is to-day; never was the silence of documents so eloquent of denial. Thus Chevalier, commenting on the sentence cited above, bids the reader "well observe that there is never a word in it about the miraculous trans-

fer " of St. Mary of Loreto. No, because the man who passed the sentence knew his business very much better than the Canon knows his. Fancy a judge going out of his way to talk about the miraculous transfer of a shrine in sentencing criminals for plundering it! Perhaps the judge-general of the March of Ancona was a skeptic like Suriano: *he* had not seen the miracle, and with many people, in matters of this kind, seeing is believing. But whether or no, he had the good sense to mind his own business.

It is not denied—because it can not be denied—that the "Church of St. Mary of Loreto," to which pilgrims brought their offerings before 1315, is identical with the Holy House of Loreto. But an attempt is made to show that it was originally a parish church, and that it existed long before 1291. With this we are to deal next.

XI.

Mr. Bishop tells us "that the actual fabric itself of the old church of Loreto was held in popular veneration in the second half of the fifteenth century,"¹ that "we have not yet up to 1471 heard anything of the Holy House,"² and says of the account of Teremanus: "This document is not a history of a Holy House which stood in, or near, the old church of Loreto; but expressly purports to be a history of the old church of Loreto itself, which the author identifies with the Holy House of Nazareth wherein the Annunciation took place; and is accordingly the structure preserved intact in the present basilica when the latter was built."³ The testimony of Teremanus to the identity of what was known before his day as the "Church of St. Mary of Loreto" with what is known to-day as the Holy House of Loreto can not be gainsaid, for it rests on the bed-rock

¹ *The Tablet*, Nov. 10, '06, p. 724.

² *Ib.*

-*Ib.* Nov. 24, p. 805.

of fact. Whether you take the fabric to be an old parish church or the Holy House of Nazareth, there can be no shadow of doubt that the "Church of St. Mary of Loreto," "St. Mary of Loreto," the "Holy House of Loreto," are simply different names for what, in the words of Flavius Blondus, Secretary of Pope Eugenius IV., was already in 1451, "the most celebrated sanctuary (*sacellum*) in all Italy."¹ Before the last quarter of the fifteenth century, while it is still commonly referred to in the documents cited by our author as the "Church of St. Mary of Loreto,"² there was built around it the great basilica which encloses it to-day. Therefore "the actual fabric itself of the old church of Loreto," to use Mr. Bishop's words, is what we know to-day as the *Santa Casa* or Holy House. This is the "chapel" of which Suriano's sister says, in the latter part of the 15th century: "Everybody believes that it was miraculously carried away from that country, and crossed the sea, and came to Ancona; and down to the present time it is known as St. Mary of Loreto."

¹Cited by Chevalier at page 191.

²At page 180, Chevalier tells us that the Vicar-General of Osimo, Feb. 15, 1438, imposed as a penance on a blasphemer "once to visit the Holy House of St. Mary of Loreto—*Domum sacratissimam Sanctae Mariae de Laureto*," but warns us at the same time that we must understand "*domus*" here in the sense of the Italian word "*duomo*." Now the obvious

The next point to be determined is this: Was "the actual fabric itself of the old church" known as St. Mary of Loreto originally a church? Yes, say Canon Chevalier and Mr. Bishop; it was the old parish church of the district. It is a pity they did not go to Loreto to examine the Holy House for themselves, or at least condescend to learn something about it from those who did examine it. This would have been a more likely way of getting at the truth than theorizing at long range about the matter and writing learned dissertations. "In Dean Swift's well-known tale," says Newman, in words that are pat to the purpose, "you have an account of certain philosophers of Laputa, who carried their head under their arm. These sagacious persons seldom made direct use of their senses, but acted by reason; a tailor, for instance, who has to measure for a suit of clothes, I think, is described, not as taking out his measures, but his instruments, quadrant, telescope, and the like. He measured a man as he would measure a mountain or a bog; and he ascertained his build and his carriage as he might determine the right ascension of Sirius or the revolution of a comet. It is but a vulgar way to handle and turn about the living substance of the Latin "*domus*" is "house." The Italian "*duomo*" signifies a stately and majestic church—not a tiny one-windowed, flat-roofed bit of a thing like the *Santa Casa*.

ject who was before him; so our Laputan retreated, pulled out his theodolite instead of his slips of parchment, and made an observation from a distance. It was a grand idea to make a coat by private judgment and a theodolite; and depend upon it, when it came home it did not fit." ¹ The account that our learned Laputans give of the origin of the *Santa Casa* is just as much a misfit as the coat made by the tailor who measured his man as he would measure a mountain or a bog.

The Holy House, as Mr. Garrat says, is its own silent witness. It is a standing refutation of the theory as to its origin which these men have set up. No one who examines it can fail to be convinced that it never was built for a parish church. It is but a little over 30 feet long by 13 feet wide; it is flat-roofed; it has only one small window, and that a square one; before the time of Pope Clement VII., there was but one door, which opened at the side, not at the end, as the doors of churches always do. It is made of stones that look like bricks, and, in size and shape, are unlike the stones of churches built in Italy since the first church was built there. In the east (end) wall is an ancient cupboard, with a shelf of cedar-wood, and in the side walls (north and south)

¹ *Present Position of Catholics*, ed. of 1899, pp. 349-350.

are the remains of a cross-beam, also of cedar, which formed the top of a partition. To crown all, its walls stand on the bare earth without foundations. This was made plain in 1531, when workmen were digging around it with a view to encasing it in marble. Again, in 1672, when a new pavement was being laid down, "many people passed their hands and sticks freely under portions of the sacred walls, the ground on which they rest being uneven."¹ Once again, when the pavement was renewed in 1751, during the pontificate of Benedict XIV., the same thing was made manifest, as witness these words of the official report placed in the archives of Loreto: "We, the undersigned architects and inspectors, in accordance with our art, knowledge, and conscience, certify that the sacred walls of this Holy House, by us well known, from the first step of the altar to all the part containing the external altar of the Annunciation, have not any sort of foundation: there is found under the sacred walls made ground, and in some parts dust."² The House stands on what was once the public road leading to Recanati.

But was there not, years and years before the date assigned to the miraculous translation, a

¹ Garrat, p. 23.

² *Ib.*

parish church known as St. Mary of Loreto, in the district of Loreto? There was. It is described in extant documents as the "Church of St. Mary *in fundo Loreti*,"¹ the "Church of St. Mary of Loreto, *in fundo Loreti*," "the rural Church of St. Mary of Loreto." Under the first of these titles it is mentioned in a document bearing date Jan 4, 1193. On that date the Bishop of Humana ceded the church and all its appurtenances to the monks (Camalduli) of

¹ As explaining the phrase "in fundo Laureti" Chevalier observes: "The tiny republic or commune of Recanati was divided into *fondi* or *corti*, of which Loreto was one." He gives no authority or reference of any kind. The word "fondo," with the meaning of district or division of territory, is not found in any one of several Italian dictionaries that I have consulted, and the word "corto," as substantive, is not given at all, except as a shortened form of "cortezza" in quasi-poetical usage. Besides, "fundus" in Latin has a well-defined meaning, and there is question of this meaning as it occurs in the phrase before us not the meaning of an Italian word that has been substituted for it. In Latin "fundus" means "bottom," and also a "field" or "farm." In the phrases in question, it seems to combine both meanings, just as in English the word "bottom" sometimes signifies "low land or meadows through which a river flows" (Standard Dictionary.) By the phrase "in fundo Laureti" I understand, therefore "in the lowlands or meadows of Loreto"—a meaning which answers exactly to the description given of the place in the document of Jan. 4, 1193. It is also to be observed that the land on which the church stood did not belong to the commune of Recanati, as Garrat points out, but to the Bishop of Humana; hence "fundus Laureti" cannot be taken to mean one of the districts into which the commune was divided. I am far from saying that "fundus," or its Italian equivalent "fondo," was never applied to a whole district, but this was by an extension of its primary meaning. The names of meadows and valleys well adapted for farming were in course of time extended to the surrounding districts.

Fonte Avellana. The wording of the document is important as showing that this was an ordinary parish church. Chevalier refrains from citing the words, though he does cite, word for word, numberless documents of vastly less consequence. I find them, however, in a work entitled *La Sainte Maison de Lorette*, by the Abbé Milochau. Among the belongings of this church there are mentioned "books, and chalices, and bells, and vestments, and parishioners, with lands and vineyards, olive and fig trees, and mills, and mill-waters, and meadows, and pastures." ¹

Chevalier's comment on this document is interesting. "The Church of St. Mary of Loreto (*Notre Dame de Lorette*) existed, then, at the end of the 12th century. To escape from this crushing conclusion they [those who uphold the authenticity of the Holy House] have concocted all sorts of arguments" (p. 141). Indeed! Any one who has before him the words cited above—words which our author is careful not to give—will see how little need there is of "concocting" arguments. Here are two out of six that Mr. Garrat builds on the solid basis of the facts which that document supplies: "3. The land on which the Holy House stood belonged to the Commune of

Recanati, whereas that on which this church was situated was the property of the Bishop of Humana. The act of donation was not signed by the authorities of Recanati, but only by Monsignor Giordano, the chapter, and the rector of Gardetto. 4. Among the property of the church given over by the Bishop of Humana are enumerated water-mills. The land must have been by the side of a river [the mention of 'meadows' also indicates this], and the church not on the top of a hill but in the plain of the Musone" (p. 436). The only sort of a mill that one might expect to find within measurable distance of the top of the high hill on which stands the town of Loreto, with its *Santa Casa*, would be a wind-mill. Apart also from the proofs already given that the *Santa Casa* was from the first a cottage merely, it is incredible that a church so well furnished and richly endowed as was "St. Mary *in fundo Laureti*" should have been a poor and lowly little structure set down, and that too without foundations, on a public highway.

The same church is mentioned again in a document dated March 11, 1285, and 35 years later in a bull of Pope John XXII. A certain Botius, son of Manfredus of Montelupone, was "on the point of being despoiled,"¹ as he com-

¹ "Spoliatum fore te asseris." Mr. Bishop seems to have

plains to the pope,—of his right to a prebend, or stipend for service, in several churches, and of his right to dispose of “one half (the stipends or revenues) of the rural church of St. Mary of Loreto—*mediatatis ruralis ecclesiae Sanctae Mariae de Laureto rector existis.*” On the face of it, this is an altogether different thing from the plundering of a “church” of the same name (from which this one is distinguished by the epithet “rural,”) by a gang of brigands in 1313; and how Mr. Bishop could have imagined that the papal bull related to this latter affair is to me a mystery. The two places of worship have absolutely nothing in common but the name. The description given of each in the documents is wholly different. One is a parish church (documents of 1193 and 1285); is situated “in the lowlands of Loreto”; has its meadows and its water-mills; is served by the monks of Fonte Avellana. With this we identify that which is mentioned in the papal bull (1320) (1) because of the epithet “rural,” (2) because it is in itself a church of some consequence, having ecclesi-

taken “*spoliatum fore*” for “*spoliatum fuisse.*” He construes the future infinitive passive of “*spoliare*” as if it were the perfect infinitive passive, and so refers the act of “spoliation” to the past, whereas the pope, echoing the words of his petitioner, refers it to the future—“you say you are on the point of being unjustly deprived.” This was in 1320. The plundering of the church of the pilgrimage had taken place some six or seven years before.

astical benefices. The other, also called "St. Mary of Loreto," is a shrine and place of pilgrimage (document, of 1315); is situated "in the diocese and district of Recanati" on a high hill, where it is still to be seen; has for its endowments the offerings of pilgrims—money, wax-candles, images in wax and silver, garlands with pearls, scarfs and silk, etc.; is served by a chaplain (*cappellanus*) who has been placed there by the Lord Bishop of Recanati, not to do parish work, but, as it is expressly stated, "to collect the offerings of the said church." One other circumstance must be mentioned which serves to identify completely this "church" with the Holy House of Loreto. The garlands and silken scarfs were taken by the robbers "from off the image and icon (*cona*) of the Blessed Virgin, and the image of our Lord Jesus Christ which was in the said icon." This refers plainly to the miraculous statue of Our Lady with the Divine Child in her arms, which is still in the Holy House. The parish church that was in the lowlands of Loreto seems to have disappeared in the course of the 14th century. It does not figure in any document later than 1320. Its foundations have been quite lately unearthed, about a mile from the Holy House. This other "St. Mary of Loreto," the "church" of the miraculous

statue and of the pilgrimage, has survived—a case of the survival of the fittest, not certainly in a physical, but in a moral and religious, sense.

I have shown that the Holy House, which pilgrims describe as forming the main part of a crypt-chapel in the place of the Annunciation at Nazareth, disappeared from there about 1291, leaving its foundations behind. I have shown, on the other hand, that a tiny stone structure, variously described in documents as the “Church of St. Mary of Loreto,” as “St. Mary of Loreto,” as a “chapel,” as a “little sanctuary (*sacellum*), the most celebrated in all Italy,” and finally as the “Alma Domus,” or “Santa Casa,” was already in 1313 a place of pilgrimage at Loreto; that it stands there at this day without its foundations; that its measurements have been found to correspond exactly, or as Teremanus says *ad unguem*, to those of the foundations that are left at Nazareth; that all its woodwork is of cedar; that the stone and mortar used in building it are the same as the stone and mortar used in Nazareth, unlike the stone and mortar used in Italy; that tradition, already in 1485 immemorial (*tucti credono sino al presente*), identifies it as the Holy House of Nazareth, by angel hands “snatched from an unworthy

domination;" and that God Himself has sealed with miracles innumerable the truth of this tradition. Let those who deny it, who speak of it as "a solemn lie,"¹ conceiving of history and its methods after their own narrow, unhistorical way, say that this is not an historical proof of the authenticity of the Holy House. They are welcome to say so, and to think so. But to me it is historical, and even more than historical: it is physical, scientific, philosophical.

¹ "un solenne mendacio"—Il P. de Feis: *La S. Casa de Nazzareth ed il Santuario di Loreto.*

XII.

Having cited the bull of Pope John XXII., already referred to, Canon Chevalier observes: "This rural church of St. Mary of Loreto is clearly that of the pilgrimage, which was plundered in 1313. Of its heavenly origin (*origine celeste*) the pope has not a word to say, while his successors in the 16th century will let slip no occasion of speaking about it. For him, then, the legend did not exist, and the petition addressed to him has not a syllable about it. The translation by angels is therefore a myth"—p. 489.

I have already pointed out that the epithet "rural" serves to distinguish this church from another "St. Mary of Loreto," which was a shrine and place of pilgrimage, and to identify it with the parish church of "St. Mary in the lowlands of Loreto." Had there been but one "St. Mary of Loreto" at the time, there would have been no need of the distinction. The petition or *supplica* addressed to the pope, who resided at Avignon, further confirms this. The plaint of the petitioner, as is clear from the

pope's bull in reply, is that he was on the point of being unjustly deprived of his prebends, or ecclesiastical stipends, in "the churches of St. James and St. Lazarus, of Recanati, and St. Mary of Varano, and of his right to dispose of half the stipends, or revenues as the case may be, of the rural church of St. Mary of Loreto—quod in Sancti Jacobi et Sancti Lazari de Recaneto ac Sancte Marie de Varan. ecclesiis prebendatus, et medietatis ruralis ecclesiae Sancte Marie de Laureto, quibus spoliatum fore te asseris, rector existis." The bull is wholly concerned with benefices and prebends, and it is plain that the "rural church of St. Mary of Loreto" belonged to the same class as the other churches mentioned; that it was a church of some magnitude, having its prebendaries who received a stipend out of its revenues. On the other hand, the "church of the pilgrimage" was served by one chaplain, whose business it was simply to "receive the offerings" of the pilgrims. This is but to repeat, in a measure, what has already been said. But the point is an important one. All that the Canon says of the pope's silence, and the petitioner's silence, respecting the "heavenly origin" of St. Mary of Loreto is beside the mark—*canit extra chorum*, "he is barking up

the wrong tree," as it is rudely but forcefully expressed on this side of the water.

After having proved to his own complete satisfaction that the Holy House of Nazareth was but a cave hewn out in the rock,¹ or was forever lost to view before the time of Constantine, or was "transformed" out of existence when the first Church of the Annunciation was erected at Nazareth, or was demolished by the Saracens, or surely must have perished in some way or other; and that the House which stands to-day without its foundations under the dome of the great basilica at Loreto is the old parish church of "St. Mary *in fundo Laureti*," Canon Chevalier sets himself to account for the origin of the legend of its miraculous translation. He bids us, however, take note that this "is not indispensable" to proving his thesis: "it is enough to have established that the legend of Loreto is false; I am not bound to explain how it originated" (p. 479). If the falsity of the "legend" were something that admitted of being established with mathematical, or with physical, certainty, the point would be well taken. But where, as in the present instance, the proof

¹ It is Suriano that says this. But as Chevalier sets so much store by Suriano's testimony, and never even hints that there is aught amiss with any one of his statements, he is rightly presumed to stand sponsor for this statement.

involves (1) the assumption that there is no source of information about the past except the "document," and (2) the assumption that one has before one absolutely all of the documents bearing on the question, and (3) the assumption that one's own interpretation of the documents is infallibly correct, the case is different. All of these assumptions may be challenged, and as for the third, I venture to think that the present series of papers has gone far to make it untenable. And so I can not hold Chevalier absolved from the duty of giving some rational explanation of the origin of the "legend." The very fact of his essaying such explanation goes to show that he has an uneasy feeling that some explanation is due. And not without reason; for here is what he maintains. *There was an old parish church in the diocese of Recanati known as St. Mary of Loreto. In the church was a statue of the Blessed Virgin, which became an object of popular devotion, and drew pilgrims from far and near. Some time after the middle of the fifteenth century, or to keep strictly to the document, in the year 1472, Teremanus made up a story to the effect that this church was the Holy House of Nazareth, carried thither by angels at the close of the thirteenth century. This was incontinently believed by everybody.*

I have shown that the Holy House of Loreto can not be identified with the old parish church of St. Mary *in fundo Laureti*. But let us grant for the sake of argument that it can. The question arises, how did people ever bring themselves to believe that this church was the House of Nazareth? It is sheer nonsense for Chevalier to say that he is not bound to find a satisfactory answer to this question. What he is pleased to call the "legend" of the miraculous translation is at least intelligible. 'As Suriano admits, "God can do greater things." And we can understand how, when a building is suddenly set down in a place, and it is seen resting on the bare earth without foundations, and the foundations are ascertained to be in another place, it can be believed to have come from thence. But how a parish church, built to serve that purpose, certified to be such in authentic documents, used as a place of worship continuously for many generations, linked with its past and with its origin by an unbroken chain of local tradition, bound up in a hundred different ways with the life and the history of the community—how such a building as this could ever come to be regarded, by the very people who knew its past so well, as the identical house which erstwhile sheltered the Holy Family at Nazareth, this,

I confess, I can not by the utmost stretch of imagination conceive.

To account for the origin of the "legend" Chevalier cites several cases which he alleges to be analogous. The first is that of William Tell. Tell is said to have freed Switzerland from the Austrian yoke between 1298 and 1308. The story of his exploits was not published till 1470. Historical criticism to-day sets it aside as legendary, and even regards the person of Tell as a myth. It remains to be seen, however, whether the lack of earlier documentary evidence, on which historical criticism rests its argument, may not prove to be as unstable a foundation in the instance of Tell as it has proved in that of Romulus, the founder of Rome. Modern historians and archeologists have denied the very existence of Romulus. But recent excavations made in Rome have brought to light indisputable proof of the ancient tradition, "and the visitor to Rome in 1906 is able to stand by the very tomb under which his remains were laid and which was a sacred spot for over a thousand years." ¹

But let us suppose that the whole story is a fable, and Tell a myth. *Se non è vero, è ben trovato*—if not true, it can easily pass for the

¹ Rome corresp. of *The Catholic Universe*, under date of Dec. 22, 1906.

truth. There is nothing unlikely about the thing: sober history is full of deeds such as are credited to the Swiss patriot. Besides, dead men tell no tales, whether for or against themselves, and William Tell, if he ever lived, was dead and buried at least a hundred and fifty years before the story was written. On the other hand, the "Church of St. Mary of Loreto" was standing where it stands to-day when Teremanus drew up his account. *It could speak for itself; it could tell its own tale.* Supposing it to have been the old parish church, its whole structure, its roof, its walls, the stone and mortar which composed its walls, its bells,¹ and above all its foundations laid deep in the ground, attesting the fact that it was built on the spot—all these, to say nothing of the unbroken chain of local tradition going back to its origin and attaching it to the soil of Italy, would cry out in protest against any attempt at weaving the fable of what Chevalier calls its "heavenly origin." If, some seven years after Teremanus wrote his account, "everybody" believed, with Suriano's sister, that the "chapel" of St. Mary

¹ Among the "belongings"—"pertinentiis" of the Church of St. Mary *in fundo Laureti*, mentioned in the document of 1193 are "campanis" or bells. The Latin for a small bell is *tintinnabulum*. The word *campana* is from the Italian, and means a "large church bell" (Harper's Latin Dictionary, 1889), as also appears from the derivative *campanile*—"a belfry."

of Loreto was the Virgin's earthly Home, carried by angels over seas from Nazareth, this was because everybody in the time going before believed it, and because a close inspection of the building would reveal the fact that it was originally a cottage, and the knowledge that it stood there without its own foundations would point to the conclusion that it came from where the foundations had been seen.

The analogy is even more shadowy in the other two instances cited by Chevalier. On two different occasions during the past century, bodies were found in the Roman catacombs which, from the existence of certain emblems on the slabs that closed the *loculi* and the presence of a phial of blood, were judged to be those of martyrs. Our author tells us that Signor Marucchi has since established certain principles of archaeology from which it follows that this judgment is at fault. Perhaps it does follow; I don't know; but I do know that there is no parallel between these cases and that of the Holy House. To believe that a body, found in a catacomb *loculus* bearing such marks about it, is that of a martyr, seems to be quite natural and quite reasonable; to believe that a building, which, by the hypothesis, bears no mark about it of ever having been anything but a church, is in reality a cottage carried from afar

by the ministry of angels, would be absurd and even idiotic. Moreover, archaeology, in our case, instead of being against the belief is decisively in favour of it, for the stones and mortar and wood of the Holy House bespeak its Eastern origin.

XIII.

The writer of a critical review of Canon Chevalier's book in *L'Ami du Clergé*, now known to be Father Eschbach, deals with the difficulty raised over the existence, before 1291, of a church of St. Mary *in fundo Laureti*. He shows from a document cited by Vogel (which Chevalier has failed to reproduce) that the Holy House, instead of having a large lot of arable land attached, was as late as 1439, without any land other than "a little garden" (*hortulum*) made over to it by the Commune of Recanati, and that, while the church which was *in fundo Laureti* had its water-mills, it is expressly stated in a document cited by Chevalier himself (p. 312) that "the rector and canons of the Church of Our Lady of Loreto" (i. e. the basilica enclosing the Holy House) not only had no mill of their own (*cum ipsi nullum habeant molendinum*), but had no place where one could be set up, and were at a great distance from the nearest mill (*propter molendinorum distantiam et itineris difficultatem*). The attempt to show that the sanctuary of the pil-

grimage existed at Loreto long before 1294 thus collapses utterly, and the old tradition therein finds new support.

Incidentally the witer makes it appear that Canon Chevalier can not be implicitly relied on. At page 466 Chevalier says: "One day when Canon Alex. Grospellier, who edited the offices of saints proper [to the diocese of Grenoble,] explained to the promotor of the faith the reasons that led to the omission, from the new diocesan calendar, of the names of St. Crescent and St. Zachary, which are still found in the Roman Martyrology, Mgr. Verde [the promoter of the faith] made, unsolicited, the following observation: 'Were the documents, relating to the translation of the House of Loreto carefully studied in this way, I well believe the story would prove to be unfounded.'" Now this is very circumstantial, and has all the appearance of being true. But here is the signed statement that Mgr. Verde has requested the writer in *L'Ami du Clergé* to make public:

The undersigned entirely disavows the words attributed to him, because he is conscious of never having uttered them. He would go further and say that he could not have uttered them, for the reason that they are altogether contrary to his mind, whether on the question at issue or the like questions.

Signed: ALEXANDER VERDE.

Chevalier's whole work is an elaborate attempt at proving (1) that the Holy House ceased to exist at Nazareth hundreds of years before the date on which it is believed to have been removed from thence by angels, and (2) that what is known to-day as the Holy House of Loreto is in reality the old parish church of St. Mary *in fundo Laureti*. Up to page 487 there is no hint of an alternative to this account of the origin of the shrine. Even on that page "the rural church of St. Mary of Loreto" is unhesitatingly identified with "the church of the pilgrimage," which was plundered in 1313, and the unbroken continuity of the pilgrimage ever since that date serves to establish beyond question the identity of "the church of the pilgrimage" with the Holy House. But in the second half of the same page, where our author addresses himself more immediately to the task of accounting for the origin of the Lauretan sanctuary and its "legend," he loses sight of everything he has up to this point maintained. He begins his review of the "explanations that have been offered," with these words: "The most obvious explanation is that pilgrims brought from Nazareth a sufficient quantity of stones to build the Holy House at Loreto, in memory and on the model of the Blessed Virgin's house." One

can scarcely credit one's senses. This from the man who plumes himself on having proved up to the hilt that no pilgrim who has left any record behind him ever yet set eyes on the Blessed Virgin's House! How is a building that is affirmed never to have been seen at all by the pilgrims who are supposed to have brought stones from Nazareth going to impress itself on their memories and serve as a model for another building? And this other building, modelled on an unseen cottage, how does it come to be the parish Church of St. Mary *in fundo Laureti*? Is there any other known instance of a parish church modelled on a cottage? Is there the faintest hint in the documents of 1193, 1285, and 1320, that this rural church was made of stones carried from Nazareth by pilgrims, or that it was modelled on the Blessed Virgin's house? No, not the faintest. And yet the appeal is to documents, and this whole question, according to Chevalier, must be decided by documentary evidence. The only "obvious" thing that I can see about this alleged "explanation" is the utter inconsistency of our author in citing it at all. The fact that he does cite it betrays some sense of the absurdity of the explanation offered by himself, that, namely, *Santa Casa* is simply an old parish church.

But I have something to say of this "most obvious" of the "explanations," considered in itself. First of all, there is not, in the vast mass of documents gathered by Chevalier, one trace or hint, even the remotest, of pilgrims bringing a single stone from Nazareth, to say nothing of stones enough to construct the *Santa Casa*. The cry of our critics is "documents, documents"; let them keep to the documents, then, and not thrust their crude guesses upon us, and insist that we shall follow these rather than the constant tradition of two peoples,¹ and the consensus of Catholics for more than five hundred years. For the rest, to cite the words of Mr. Garrat, who pointed out many years ago the futility of this "explanation" that is given the place of honour by Chevalier, "The sacred building also itself bears decisive testimony that it was not built where it stands: its entire lack of foundations shows that they were left elsewhere; its standing in the middle of a former roadway proves that no one erected it there; its mortar, being quite different from that of Italy, and exactly the same as that of the Holy Land, tells us that its stones were cemented together in Palestine; and lastly, the monuments of its stay in the wood and on the

¹ As we shall see later, the critics have also to reckon with the tradition of the people of Dalmatia.

hill of the Antici show that it was no mere commemorative chapel, for that would have been stationary"—p. 195. Verily is the Holy House its own witness; nor can any amount of critical cross-questioning pick a flaw in its testimony. What has been called in derision its "wondrous flitting," first to Tersatto, then to the wood of laurels at Loreto, thence to the field of the two brothers (Antici), and lastly to the public road, may now be seen not to have been without a purpose, for in all of these places there are monuments of its stay, which serve to accredit the tradition as to its origin, and to confound the men who come forward with their lame conjectures about it to-day.

"While no proofs can be given" (of this account, which therefore remains a mere guess), resumes Chevalier, "there are cited as analogous cases the Campo Santo of Pisa, a cemetery covered with earth that was brought from Palestine (there is also that of the Holy Cross of Jerusalem) [presumably the cemetery attached to the church of *Santa Croce in Gerusalémme*, Rome], the chamber of St. Catherine of Sienna, conveyed (in bands of iron) to the Church of the Minerva at Rome, and numerous representations of the Holy Sepulchre, of [the crypt of the Nativity] at Bethlehem, of the Stations of the Cross. The

Church of St. Stephen at Bologna contains fac-similes of seven sanctuaries of Palestine, including that of Nazareth, with fragments of the Holy Sepulchre" (pp. 487-8). These instances are interesting, but the essential element of analogy is lacking in every one. Thus in the case of the cemeteries, it is not denied that earth was really brought from Palestine to cover them, and this is all that is claimed. To found a genuine analogy with the case of the Holy House, the claim should be that the cemeteries themselves were transferred bodily from Palestine! Neither is it denied that the chamber of St. Catherine of Sienna was actually carried to Rome, and is now in the Church of the Minerva. Here there is analogy, but it is clean against those who cite it, for it was not the stones but the chamber itself that was brought to Rome. As for the representations and fac-similes of the shrines of the Holy Land, then and only then will the analogy hold when a single instance can be pointed to, in Italy or out of it, where the fac-simile is seriously claimed to be the original shrine.

Chevalier himself mentions the fac-simile of the Nazarethan sanctuary that is in the Church of St. Stephen at Bologna—mentions it and no more. As he has ransacked records on every

hand for information about the Holy House, it is somewhat strange that he did not make inquiries about this fac-simile of it. Perhaps the reason will appear in the sequel. St. Petronio, who was Bishop of Bologna in the 5th century, went on a pilgrimage to Nazareth, and having taken the exact measurements of the Holy House, caused a fac-simile of it to be built on his return.¹ Chevalier's main thesis is that no pilgrim, that we know of, ever saw the Holy House at Nazareth, because it wasn't there to be seen. But the fac-simile at Bologna, dating from the 5th century, shows that it was there then; and the fac-simile at Walsingham, England, dating from the eleventh century, shows that it was there then; and if we were to accept the "explanation" that is being here considered, the fac-simile at Loreto, dating from the 13th century, would show that the Holy House actually existed in Nazareth at that time! So much for Chevalier's main thesis.

While on the subject of fac-similes, I must not forget to mention that there is one of the Holy House of Loreto in the Church of St. Dominic at Cremona, which dates at least from the early part of the 15th century—a fac-simile of a fac-simile, shall we be told?

¹ *La S. Casa venerata a Loreto*, by Alfonso Maria di Gesu: Fermo, 1906. Chevalier himself cites this work at page 469.

XIV.

As a pendant to the "explanation" last dealt with, Chevalier adds at page 488: "In the 12th century a family named *Angeli*, an offshoot (on the female side) of the imperial house of Comnenus, founded an autocracy in Epirus. Driven out, at the end of the following century, by the Venetians, the *Angeli* sought an asylum in Italy, in the direction of Ancona and Recanati, and were the builders and benefactors of [the Church] of St. Mary of Loreto. Hence the expression 'by the hands of angels,' to wit, the *Angeli*." As a "variant" of this account we have it that "these relations of an emperor Comnenus got a permit from him to bring the stones of the Virgin's house into Italy, and it was with these stones they built the chapel of Loreto. Not having enough of them, they finished the sanctuary with native stones." Another "variant" is that the *Santa Casa* "was built by a devout Christian named De Angelis," and another that "the architect De Angelis brought the plan of the Blessed Virgin's house" from Nazareth, (where according to Chevalier the only house, at least at that time,

was a cave hewn out in the rock) "to build a fac-simile of it at Loreto" (p. 489). There is still another, not mentioned by our author, that Crusaders clad in white, returning from the Holy Land, carried the stones from Nazareth, and were hailed by the people as "Angels."¹

After reciting the first version given above, Chevalier cautions the reader not "to be too

¹Here is one more "variant," given by "E. B." in the November, 1906, *Pastoralia*, a little monthly for the clergy, published in London, England: "I thought it was common knowledge that a Cardinal N. de. Angelis built the shrine. The builder's receipt, which, I was told long ago is still extant, shows how much His Eminence paid for the construction of this dear little chapel, which is a copy of the Holy House of Nazareth." And he adds: "Angelorum ministerio translata [transferred by the ministry of angels—cited from the Divine Office] should read: *a Cardinale de Angelis aedificata* [built by Cardinal de Angelis]." And so "E. B.," on the strength of what "he was told long ago," is ready to revise the Divine Office for us. Another writer, who signs himself "Z," tells us, in the September *Pastoralia* that, "Even in Rome the Pope himself, as late as 1507, is not quite certain what house Loreto claims to possess, and believes it to be the grotto of Bethlehem." That is to say, the Pope was such an idiot as to believe that the cottage known as the *Santa Casa* of Loreto was originally a cave in a rock at Bethlehem! "Z" is simply the blind follower of a blind leader. In the bull of Pope Julius II., dated Oct. 21, 1507, the Holy House is said to have been "carried by the hands of angels from Bethlehem to Fiume," in Dalmatia. The Pope had just spoken of it as the house "where the Blessed Virgin herself was conceived, and brought up, and greeted by the Angel." Now any one in his right senses would say at once that the word "Bethlehem" is a clerical error for "Nazareth" in this bull of Pope Julius. For what is the alternative? The alternative is that this Pope was so crassly ignorant as not to know that it was at Nazareth Gabriel saluted the Virgin Mary. And yet Canon Chevalier adopts this incredible alternative in three several places in his book (pp. 71, 268, 324), and tries to make capital out of what he calls "this monstrous blunder."

ready to cry out against this explanation," and darkly hints that "the documents on which it is based might be forthcoming, some day or other, from among the papers of their fortunate owner." The word "fortunate" is as the straw that shows how the wind blows. The ruling motive with Chevalier, as is shown in a hundred different places in his book, and in a hundred different ways, is to discredit the tradition regarding the miraculous translation of the Holy House. But he has himself taught us to be skeptical about the existence of documents that have never seen the light, and it shall go hard but we will better the instruction.

It is difficult to discuss these conjectural "explanations" seriously; difficult even to have patience with those who put them forward. *Mutato nomine, de te fabula narratur*—change angels into men, and you change, not the legend, but the chief actors in it: it is the same legend still, but much the poorer for this tinkering with it. Instead of real angels, you have the *magni nominis umbra*—a shadow of the mighty name. As between the traditional account, certified by Roman Pontiffs, confirmed by miracles, and this clumsily made-up one, with its many variants, so eloquent of its original inadequacy, I unhesitatingly adhere to the former. *Ne vero, ne ben trovato*, is the only

formula that will fit it—neither true, nor a good imitation of the truth.

These “explanations” do not even pretend to have any foundation in fact: they are guesses pure and simple. And they don’t explain. They take no account of the tradition of the Dalmatians as to the stay of the Holy House at Tersatto. Neither do they take account of the fact that St. Mary of Loreto was a famous shrine and place of pilgrimage, straight along from the beginning of the 14th century to the time when Teremanus drew up his account in 1472. It was thus always in the public eye; it had a continuous history; and it seems incredible that, if it had been from the first a facsimile, it should lose that character, and suddenly come to be looked upon as the original cottage of Nazareth. It boots not to invoke “the creative and poetic power of the popular fancy,” as does the Cologne *Volkzeitung*, cited by *The Catholic Fortnightly Review* (Feb. 1, 1906). For the “explanations,” too, are children of fancy; and if we are to go by fancy, we prefer to follow a fancy that is creative and poetic rather than one which is neither. But popular fancy was not free to weave fairy tales in this case, because it would be ever controlled by the common sense of the multitudes from far and near who visited the place, and, above all, by

the judgment of the ecclesiastical authorities under whose jurisdiction the Lauretan sanctuary was from the first.

But let us suppose that the “architect De Angelis” (fancy an “architect” engaged in such a work! *Nec deus intersit nisi dignus vindice nodus inciderit*—Nor let a god come in, unless you have some work to do that is worthy of him) built at Loreto a fac-simile of the Holy House of Nazareth. The first thing he would have done would be to dig the earth and lay the foundations. Why? Because no architect, no person in his senses, none but a consummate fool, would have done otherwise. Besides, a real fac-simile of a building that has foundations must have its foundations, too. Now it is a fact ascertained by actual observation, and this not once but over and over again; a fact attested by authentic documents which may be seen at this day in the archives of Loreto; a fact which is capable of further verification at any time, that the Holy House of Loreto stands without foundations on the bare earth. An ounce of fact is worth tons of theory. At the touch of this single fact all the laboured “explanations” of our critics

Are melted into air, into thin air,

And,

Leave not a rack behind.

Finally, our author is of opinion that a chapel which stood beside St. Mary of Loreto may have led to confusion in the popular mind, and that this may have given rise to the "legend." He finds it "worth while recalling" that it "was founded in 1450, under the title of the Annunciation (183)," and subjoins: "This foundation warrants us in concluding once more that they did not as yet believe at this date that they had at Loreto the sanctuary itself of the Annunciation" (p. 491). When we turn back to page 183, to which the reference is given, this is what we read: "Angelo Ronconi, captain of the pontifical troops, founded on March 23, 1450, the benefice of Our Lady of the Annunciation in a chapel alongside of the church." It was not therefore a chapel that was founded under the title of Our Lady of the Annunciation, but a benefice in the chapel, and the sanctuary of the pilgrimage, not the nameless chapel, would give its title to the benefice. This warrants us in concluding once more that Chevalier is not implicitly to be relied on.

XV.

Among the documents cited by historians of the Holy House as confirming the truth of the tradition there are three that purport to have been written shortly after its arrival in Italy. First in the order of time is a document from the magistrates of Recanati certifying the removal of the House from the wood where it first rested to a hill owned by the brothers Antici. It is dated Sept. 9, 1295. Next is a letter attributed to a holy hermit known as Paul of the Wood, and addressed to a King who had asked for particulars of the miracle. The attestation of the magistrates of Recanati, appended to the letter, bears the date of June 12, 1297. The third is a short account of the origin of the Holy House said to have been written in the early part of the 14th century, some time before 1334, by the Bishop of Macerata, in whose jurisdiction the district of Loreto was at the time. The Jesuit Raphael Riera, in his *History of the August House of Loreto*, written in 1560, says that this account was taught in the schools, and that old copies

of it were to be found at Recanati in his day.¹

If the genuineness of these documents could be established, the case for the miraculous translation would plainly be made out. But, so far as can be shown to-day, not one of the three was published before the 16th century. Hence they have simply no value at all as evidence. I am not, however, greatly impressed by the force of Chevalier's criticism of their genuineness, based as it is, like what is known as the "higher criticism" of the Scripture, almost wholly on internal evidence. Such criticism is little more than learned—and some-

¹ "Unum illud scio, multis modis mirificasse Dominum Sanctuarium suum, excusumque fuisse libellum Recinetenis Antistitis jussu, qui miraculosum adventum Sanctissimæ Domus, aliaque insigniora facta simplici stilo continebat Ejus autem pervetusta exemplaria usque ad nostram ætatem Recineti sunt inventa"—Apud Martorelli, t. 1, p. 35. Chevalier draws attention (p. 162) to "the contradiction that exists between *excusum* (imprimé) and *pervetusta exemplaria*." He takes *excusum* to mean "printed." Even if it did mean this, there would be no contradiction in speaking of "very old copies" of a work published more than two hundred years before. But *excusum*, though widely used to-day in the sense of "printed" does not mean this in Riera, (1) because the art of printing (except from blocks for ornamenting fabrics) was unknown, at least in Europe, till about the middle of the 15th century; and (2) because the Jesuit wrote in classical Latin, as the specimen given above will serve to show, and in classical Latin *excusum* signifies, not "printed" of course, but when spoken of a writing, "composed." This may seem a trifling matter, but seeing that Chevalier poses as a thoroughly "scientific" writer, I wish to point out that a good knowledge of the meanings of words is something that even the tyro in hermeneutics, or the science and art of right interpretation, is supposed to have.

times anything but learned—guesswork. To give one or two instances from Chevalier. He says of the form of words “In Dei nomine, amen—In the name of God, amen,” with which the first-mentioned document opens: “Such an invocation, at the head of a letter, is unheard of at that epoch in the Marches [of Ancona].” Now, properly speaking, the document in question is not a letter, but an official testimonial and charge given by the Chancellor of Recanati to the deputy, Alexander de Servannis, who was being sent to Rome. The invocation serves to impart solemnity to it, as does a similar invocation to a document, drawn up in the same place about fifty years later, which is cited at the foot of the page.¹

Again, at page 152, in his critique of the letter attributed to Paul of the Wood, Chevalier says: “The term *divæ* applied [in the letter] to Mary is of the Renaissance (15th century).” But St. Bonaventure, who died in 1274, addresses the Virgin in verse,

¹ “In nomine Domini, amen.—A. D. 1348, . . . Bertus Guidi Ruggieri . . . reliquit in subsidio pas-sadii SACRÆ DOMUS duodecim denarios.” This act of donation, cited by the writer in *L'Ami du Clerge* from a work entitled *Pervetusta Monumenta Almae Domus*, is interesting on its own account. It goes to show, as against Chevalier (who failed to find it, or at any rate to cite it), that St. Mary of Loreto was known as *Sacra Domus*, which is Latin for *Santa Casa* and our English “Holy House,” as far back as 1348. Thus one by one Chevalier's contentions on being weighed and sifted, are found wanting.

Ave Virgo diva poli,
and

Ave rerum potens diva,¹

Evidently there are more things on earth—to say nothing of heaven—than are dreamt of in the philosophy of those knights-errant who tilt against the Church's traditions to-day.

On Nov. 5, 1387, Pope Urban VI. granted a plenary indulgence to pilgrims who visited the sanctuary of Loreto on the feast of Our Lady's Nativity. It will be remembered that this was the first Pope crowned in Rome since 1303, the seven preceding Popes having been crowned at Avignon. It was only after the return from Avignon that the attention of the Holy See was especially directed to the Lauretan shrine, and the great Schism of the West, which broke out immediately after, tended further to delay a formal investigation of its origin and claims. The wording of this first grant of indulgence—the first, at any rate that is admitted on all hands as authentic—shows that no special inquiry into the matter had been made as yet by the Popes. "The church of St. Mary of Loreto, in the diocese of Recanati, which, as we have learned from the faithful of those parts

¹ For the citation from the Seraphic Doctor I am indebted to the Abbé J. Faurax, who has published a reply to Chevalier under the title, *La Sainte Maison de Notre Mere a Lorette*.

who have a knowledge of it, is held in great veneration"—such are the terms in which Urban VI. refers to it. The words "we have learned from the faithful of those parts (*Christi fidelibus illarum partium*)" are to be noted. It may perhaps be inferred that the Bishop "of those parts," under whose jurisdiction the shrine was and who applied its revenues freely to diocesan and other purposes, was not too anxious to draw the Pope's attention to it.

Another thing to be noted is that the church itself, or, as Mr. Bishop has it, "the actual fabric itself of the old church of Loreto," is said to have been "held in great veneration," before 1387. Therefore Canon Chevalier sets down what he ought to have known to be false, when he tells us at page 157, in speaking of the plundering of St. Mary of Loreto (1313): "Here we have the solid foundation of the devotion to Our Lady of Loreto—it will be seen that the first papal bulls speak of no other—a statue with a figure of the Virgin and the Child Jesus." For Urban's is, according to Chevalier, the very first of the papal bulls, and it has never a word at all about the statue, but refers in set terms to the "church" as being "held in great veneration."

Aye, the "church", the church of St. Mary of Loreto, the church of the pilgrimage, the

church which was plundered by the brigands in 1313, and which, our author himself declares, "beyond the possibility of doubt, is that which is known later on as the Holy House" (p. 225). As a matter of fact, it was so known as far back as 1348, as I have pointed out above. Now, what was there about this "church" that the "actual fabric itself" should be an object of great veneration? Wherefore should the faithful of the district of Loreto and of the neighbouring districts (*illarum partium*), who were conversant with its character and history (*ejus notitiam habentibus*), have brought it to the Pope's notice and prevailed upon him to sanction and enhance the veneration in which it was held by granting a plenary indulgence to the pilgrims that flocked to it? All churches are held in veneration as places of divine worship. But plainly, in this case, there is question of a special and even exceptional kind of veneration, for it was the "actual fabric itself" that the Pope tells us was venerated. The theory that this was the old parish church of St. Mary in the lowlands of Loreto has already been shown to be untenable: it is buried "in the lowlands, low," as the old song has it, never more to show itself above ground. There remains, then, one of two alternatives: either St. Mary of Loreto was a fac-simile of the Holy

House of Nazareth, or it was the "actual fabric itself" of that Holy House.

Students of old Euclid are familiar with the demonstration known as *reductio ad absurdum*, which consists in proving a thing to be true by showing that it is absurd to assume the truth of its contradictory. With this view I am going to assume that St. Mary of Loreto was a facsimile of the House of Nazareth. It would have been built towards the end of the 13th century or beginning of the 14th. Already in the first years of the 14th century it has been shown to have been a place of pilgrimage. It is not said in the document of 1315 that the pilgrimage was motived upon the statue of the Virgin with the Child in her arms, which is still venerated in the Holy House. Chevalier wants to make his readers believe that this was the motive, but he has no warrant for doing so. The document simply sets forth that the robbers carried off the ex-voto offerings which they found, not only on the statue, but also on the altar and everywhere throughout the church—*rapiendo etiam super altare dicte ecclesie et de dicta ecclesia undique omnes oblationes et omnes tortitios et faculas et ymagines de cera et de argento* (document of 1315). The motive of the devotion and of the pilgrimage, at least the fundamental motive, we learn from Pope Urban VI. in 1387,

who in turn learned it from "the faithful [*Christifidelibus*, priests no doubt as well as lay people] of those parts, who knew the church" of St. Mary of Loreto. It was the "great veneration" in which the "church"—the actual fabric itself—"of St. Mary of Loreto" was held.

Here, then, is a fact, attested in pontifical document, that in 1387, just ninety-three years after the Holy House is said to have reached Italy, the actual fabric itself of what was then more commonly known as "the church of St. Mary of Loreto," now known as the Holy House, was held in so great veneration as to attract pilgrims from all parts and draw upon itself the especial notice and favour of the Holy See. In spite of the difficulty of accounting for the great veneration paid to the fabric itself, I still hold to the assumption that this was a fac-simile of the House of Nazareth, and that the veneration paid to it was owing to this fact. The people of the Marches of Ancona would have known it at this time to be a fac-simile. The Pope (Urban VI.) assures us that "they had a knowledge of" the building and we really need no assurance of the Pope on this point. It was but a little more than ninety years since the fabric was set up, and there might have been still living men who were little children at the time of the first pilgrimage

to it. From the first it had been a place of pilgrimage. And as "every house is built by some one" (Heb. 3:4), and "as he that built the house hath more honour than the house" (Heb. 3:3), there can be no doubt at all that everybody knew who the founder of St. Mary of Loreto was—"a Cardinal N. de Angelis" will do as well as any other, and if it tends to add a touch of realism to the thing, I have no objection at all to its being maintained that everybody also knew "how much His Eminence paid for the construction of this dear little chapel, which [was] a copy of the Holy House of Nazareth."

All this before 1387, A. D. After that date the pilgrimages, always motivated fundamentally on the universally known fact that the Lauretan sanctuary was a fac-simile of the Holy House of Nazareth, went on growing in volume with the passing of the years. "In 1424," our author informs us, "by reason of the importance which the sanctuary of Loreto had assumed, the Court of Rome deliberated upon giving the charge of it to a Cardinal" (p. 177). In 1451, it was "the most celebrated sanctuary in all Italy," as Flavius Blondus, cited by our author, attests. "Pope Nicholas V. visited Loreto in 1449, the Emperor Frederick Third in 1452, and Pius II. in July 1464. Pius' successor, Paul II., took an early oppor-

tunity, in a grant of further indulgences on Nov. 1, 1464, of stating that he had himself “experienced the miraculous help of our Blessed Lady of Loreto” and also bore “personal testimony to the tradition of the place as he had known it ‘all his life long’ (*ab ineunte aetate*)” — ¹ known it, of course, as every one else had known it, for a fac-simile of the Holy House of Nazareth.

This was in 1464, November 1. Just eight years later, in 1472, Teremanus, the “governor” of the Holy House, drew up a document, the purport of which is plainly indicated in the title itself, “The miraculous Translation of the Church of Our Blessed Lady of Loreto.” All at once and from this time forward the Lauretan sanctuary ceased to be venerated as a fac-simile and was believed by everybody, popes, bishops, priests and lay people, to be the very House itself of the Virgin of Nazareth! “For we must remember that it is upon the basis supplied by Teremanus that the whole latter history of the pilgrimage rests; and that that history is a record of his unbounded, unqualified, success.” ²

Our *reductio ad absurdum* is substantially complete. It wants but the finishing touches. These I shall now proceed to give it.

¹ Mr. Bishop, “The Tablet, Nov. 10, p. 724. ”

² Mr. Bishop, *Ib.* col. 2.

XVI.

In summing up the testimony of authentic documents respecting the Holy House, Mr. Bishop says:

Up to the year 1471 inclusive, the documentary evidence as to Loreto shows the object of the pilgrimage to have been an Image of the Blessed Virgin. . . .

And in the next paragraph:

By the first half of the fifteenth century the church itself in which this Loretan Image stood appears as in some way an object of popular veneration and special respect. . . .¹

The former of these two statements is false; the latter bears a false implication. I can not for the life of me understand how such statements could have been made by Mr. Bishop after having himself, in *The Tablet* of Nov. 10, noted and commented upon the following declaration of Pope Boniface IX. in promulgating (Nov. 9, 1389) the indulgence granted by his predecessor, Urban VI., two years before: "Desiring that *the Church* of St. Mary of

¹The Tablet, Nov. 24, 1906.

Loreto, in the diocese of Recanati, which, as [Urban VI.] had learned from the faithful of those parts who knew about it, was *held in great veneration, should be honoured in a befitting way and resorted to* by the faithful, . . . he granted the indulgence," etc. The words that I have put in italics declare as plainly as it is possible for words to declare anything that it was the actual fabric itself of the church that was an object of popular veneration before the last decade of the 14th century, and that the indulgence was granted with a view of adding a further incentive to the devotion of the people towards it. Moreover, this is, as was pointed out above, absolutely the first authentic intimation that we have regarding the object of the Lauretan pilgrimage, and it is authoritative as well as authentic, contained as it is in a pontifical document. It serves, too, to indicate the object of the pilgrimage in the time preceding 1387 as well as in the subsequent time. The documentary evidence as to Loreto, therefore, shows the object of the pilgrimage to have been from the first, not an image of the Blessed Virgin, but a sanctuary of the Blessed Virgin, the same that we know to-day as the Holy House. I insist here upon this point at the risk of laying myself open to the charge of doing over again what has been once done already.

It is a pivotal point in our present thesis. I have no wish to disparage Mr. Bishop, but I can not refrain from remarking that in this, as in other instances, he has followed too trustingly the lead of Chevalier, and has fallen into the same pit.

That the object of the Lauretan pilgrimage, both before and after 1387, was the church itself of St. Mary of Loreto, now known as the Holy House, already in 1450 "the most celebrated sanctuary in all Italy," is, then, a fact that rests solidly on the testimony of an authentic papal document. I have assumed, by way of a *reductio ad absurdum*, that it was a fac-simile of the Holy House of Nazareth, and of course known as such and venerated as such, and this up to the year 1471 inclusive—for we have learned from our critical friends to date a popular belief from the time in which the first document attesting the existence of it was put on record. What happened in the following year I shall let Mr. Bishop tell. "In the year 1472," he writes, "was put forth by the then governor of the hospital, etc., of Loreto, since commonly known under the name of Teremanus, [Teremanus, by the way, describes himself in the document as 'governor of the aforementioned church,' i. e. the Holy House] the document which is the basis of later histories

and sole original authority for what has since become the general belief and *communis sensus fidelium* as to the Holy House of Loreto. This document is not a history of a Holy House which stood in, or near, the old church of Loreto; but expressly purports to be a history of the old church of Loreto itself, which the author identifies with the Holy House of Nazareth wherein the Annunciation took place; and is accordingly the structure preserved intact in the present basilica when the latter was built [it was begun in 1468].” “We must remember,” he elsewhere says, in words already cited, “that it is upon the basis supplied by Teremanus that the whole later history of the pilgrimage rests; and that that history is a record of his unbounded, unqualified, success.”

Now, if the earlier history of the pilgrimage rested on a different basis, this, as I have shown, could have been no other than the belief, or rather the knowledge, that St. Mary of Loreto was a fac-simile of the Holy House of Nazareth. When Pope Urban VI., in 1387, tells us that “the faithful of those parts,” who “knew about” St. Mary of Loreto, held it “in great veneration,” this of course implies that they knew what it was and why it was held in veneration. On the assumption that they knew it for a fac-simile of the Holy House of Naz-

areth and that this was the motive of their veneration for it, it must have been known and venerated as such long before 1387, even from the beginning, and it must have continued to be known and venerated as such long after 1387, even down to the time when Teremanus drew up his account. The year 1387 stands just about midway between 1294, the year of the miraculous translation (or, on our present assumption, the year of the building of the fac-simile,) and 1472, the year in which Teremanus so unequivocally affirmed St. Mary of Loreto (the assumed fac-simile) to be the Holy House of Nazareth. Counting backward you will find but ninety-three years to the date of the foundation of St. Mary of Loreto, and counting forward but ninety-five years to the date of the documentary declaration of its character by Teremanus. This is less than the space of a single lifetime, which is known to extend occasionally to considerably more than a hundred years. It is morally impossible, and, in view of the unbroken continuity of the pilgrimage in the meantime absolutely impossible, that a building set up as a fac-simile in 1294 should have been known and venerated as aught else than a fac-simile in 1387, or again in 1472. But in this latter year it was known and venerated as the

identical House of Nazareth borne over seas by angel hands. As, then, it is a poor rule that doesn't work both ways, it must have been so known and venerated in 1387, and from the time that it became a place of pilgrimage.

It should go without saying that "the basis supplied by Teremanus" for the Lauretan pilgrimage was no new basis. "It is certain," says Mr. Bishop, "that this tract of Teremanus, and no other document, is the original source of the history of the translated Holy House that we all know." How certain? All the early historians of the Holy House, Angelita, Riera, Tursellini, Glavinich, profess to quote from written documents and annals extant in their day, now, as far as at present known, no longer extant. Whence has Mr. Bishop got his certainty that they were all of them liars? But if the tract of Teremanus is the original source of the history, what is the source of the tract itself? Did Teremanus make up the story out of his own head, or was he but the faithful chronicler of what was known and believed in his day? Surely it is the latter question to which every person who uses his reason must return an affirmative answer. The idea that Teremanus could have palmed off upon the whole Catholic world a fabulous invention of his own, in contradiction to the known tradi-

tion of this famous place of pilgrimage, is too preposterous to find lodgment in a sane mind. And the idea that nobody knew anything about the origin of the shrine before Teremanus came upon the scene; that those who held it in so great veneration in and before 1387 did not know why they held it in veneration, is every whit as preposterous. We need no documents to be assured that whole communities of Christians, laymen, priests, and bishops, were not so bereft of reason as to pay veneration to an object without knowing why. *Cela saute aux yeux*, as the French say; the thing is self-evident. The readiness with which our critics assume that all the early historians of the Holy House were knaves, and that all other Catholics in those times, including popes, bishops, and priests, were fools, is, under one aspect, a psychological phenomenon that challenges investigation. To find the cause of it one need not study it long. It may be traced without misgiving to a pride of intellect which comes of "knowledge" that "puffeth up." To the savants of our day, the men of old were an eminently simple and gullible folk. Great and small, they were all children, consumed with wonder-lust, eager, open-mouthed, to gulp down anything and everything they were told. The light of the new criticism had not dawned, and

the world lay in darkness. Under the new light, things of the past long treasured as real are seen to be but phantoms; tradition resolves itself into legend, and fable, and myth. Everything, even religion itself, is to be reconstructed on a "scientific" basis—a word to conjure with to-day. But I am old-fashioned enough to hold that all true science is founded in reason,¹ that reason is no new endowment of man, that it ruled the course of human events from the beginning, and has its laws of procedure as firmly fixed and as little liable to change as the eternal hills.

¹ "For 'science' is but the careful and exact application of ordinary reason and good sense to the examination of any object we seek, as best we may, to understand."—St. George Mivart, *The Groundwork of Science*, p. 3.

XVII.

Of the account of Teremanus Chevalier says: "I shall not waste time in showing that this tract has not the tone of a trustworthy historical record: the preceding pages prove abundantly that it has no foundation in the past" (p. 214). The document takes its "tone" from the simple faith of the one who drew it up. Judging by the tone of it, I should say that Teremanus himself believed implicitly in the truth of the marvellous story which he tells. As to its having no foundation in the past, this assertion has no other support than our author's interpretation and—let me add—manipulation of documents. I have reached a different conclusion from the very same documents, and am content to leave the question as to the validity of the conclusion to the judgment of the impartial reader.

The gist of Teremanus's testimony is that St. Mary of Loreto was the House that sheltered the Holy Family in Nazareth, thence carried by angels, first to Tersatto, then to Loreto, where it changed places twice before it found its final

resting-place on a public road leading to Recanati. *Nota*, he adds in terse but rude Latin, *quomodo supradicta sunt scita*—"Note how the things above related became known." In 1296 the Blessed Virgin appeared to a devout servant of hers in sleep, and revealed them to him. Then sixteen "notable and good men" were sent to Nazareth, who brought with them the measurements of St. Mary of Loreto, and "there discovered traces of the foundations of the Church itself, corresponding exactly to the aforesaid measurements." He relates how a saintly hermit named Paul of the Wood saw a flame of fire descend upon the House on the festival of Our Lady's Nativity, which the hermit in question associated with the presence there of the Virgin herself. Lastly, "in warranty and witness of these things," he appeals to the living tradition of the place, handed down from father to son, from the time the House came thither.

In this concluding part, the original document evidently suffered corruption. For instance, Teremanus is made to say that of the two witnesses he examined on oath touching the tradition of the elders, one, Francis surnamed Prior, who was 120 years of age, told himself that he had several times visited the House while it was yet in the wood where it

first rested. On the other hand, the Blessed Baptist of Mantua and Angelita agree in saying it was the grandfather of this Francis, and not Francis himself, who was 120 years old. Teremanus is known to have served in the Lauretan sanctuary, from 1430 to 1473, the year of his death.¹ But even supposing that he took the testimony of this Francis surnamed Prior in 1430, and that the latter was then in his 120th year, it is plain that he could not have visited the House while it was yet in the wood—which was in 1294, sixteen years before he would have been born. Unless, therefore, we are prepared to say that Teremanus put down in his account what he as well as everybody who first set eye on it could not but know to be a manifest absurdity, we must lay the blunder to transcribers.

In reference to this concluding part, Mr. Bishop says: "I had thought of giving this portion here; but with the English before me I felt that I should be justly laying myself open to the charge of affronting the readers of *The Tablet*."² Why should the words of one who cites witnesses to establish a fact on tradition affront anybody? True, the words involve a palpable error; but is it not the critic's business to trace error to its source? Instead, Mr.

¹ "Notre Dame de Lorette," p. 210.

² *Ib.* Nov. 10, 1906; p. 724.

Bishop simply holds up to scorn the faithful servant with whose work time and frequent transcribing have dealt so hardly.

When I wrote these last words, in the early part of 1907, I little thought I should one day at Loreto find documentary evidence of their truth. On the right as you enter some way into the great basilica that encloses the Holy House, graven on a huge bronze tablet, is an old English translation of the tract of Teremanus. I quote the concluding and relevant part, word for word, and letter for letter, as I copied it on the spot:

“In confirmation of all which two vertuous men of the said city of Recanati divers times declared unto mee Prefect of Ter-
raman and Governour of the forenamed church, as followeth. The one cal’d Paul Renalduci avouched, That his grandfather’s grandfather sawe when the angels brought it over sea, and placed it in the forementioned wood, and had often visited it there. The other called Francis Prior, in like sort affirmed. That his grandfather, being CXX yearesould had also much frequented it in the same place, and for a further proof, That it had byn there, he reported that his grandfather’s grandfather had a house nigh unto it, wherein he dwelt, and that in his time it was carryed by the

angels from thence to the mountaine of the two brothers where they placed it as above said."

I Robert Corbington, Priest of the Society of Jesus in the yeare MDCXXXIV have faithfully translated the premisses out of the Latin original hung up in the said church."

Here we have, as the writer avers, a faithful translation from the Latin original made two hundred and seventy-eight years ago. It is the grandfather of Francis Prior, as we should expect, that was 120 years old. The "further proof" spoken of lies in this that, when he was a little boy he had an opportunity of going often to see the Holy House while it was in the wood, because *his* grandfather had a house near the spot, and he either stayed with his grandfather or used often to go to visit him.

In a document dated December 3d, 1459,¹ Nicholas de Astis, Bishop of Recanati, whom Mr. Bishop calls "a faithful soul" and of whom and of Andrew of Atria, chaplain of the Holy House (1408-47), he says, "I grudge to have to pass quickly over these two men: to have made their acquaintance repays me for going through this long book," pays a high tribute to the fidelity and single-mindedness of Teremanus. Also, "the veracious Vogel," as Chevalier calls

¹ Cited by Chevalier, pp. 196-99.

him, gives Teremanus a high character for integrity. But even if he had been the unscrupulous liar that our critics make him out to be, it would have been manifestly impossible for him to get his lying account believed by everybody. The skeptical Suriano, for instance, a countryman and contemporary of his, would have been among the first to expose it. Instead, he, too, as we have seen, bears incidental witness to the existence of the tradition on which Teremanus rests his account. For he makes his own sister, Sixta, say that "everybody believed" the House of Nazareth to have been conveyed over seas miraculously, and that "down to this day" it was known as "St. Mary of Loreto."

But the account drawn up by Teremanus carries circumstantial and intrinsic evidence of its trustworthiness. One who wanted to dupe people would have made up a plausible story—would have made the House come direct to where it stood, and carefully eschewed such difficult of belief and easily discredited details as the "wondrous flitting," first to Fiume, in Dalmatia, thence to the wood of Loreto, thence again to the hill of the two brothers, and lastly to the public road. And how could Teremanus have known that the foundations of the House were to be seen at Nazareth, and that they

corresponded exactly—*ad unguem*, as he phrases it—in length and breadth and thickness of wall, to the measurements of the Lauretan sanctuary? He tells us himself that he knew it because sixteen men were sent from Recanati to Nazareth in 1296, who brought back thence the measurements of the foundations they had seen there. This is how he came by the knowledge of the fact, if he is telling the truth. If he is lying, how did he gain information about the holy place at Nazareth which no document published before his time contains, and which was proved to be strictly accurate by the Franciscan Thomas of Novara in 1620? This is the latter's statement, so far as it bears on the matter in hand, as given by Chevalier at page 86: "Starting from the old and true foundation, and drawing a straight line of measurement from it, the place of Nazareth was, to the great joy of all, found perfectly equal, as if a footprint, to the Holy House of Loreto, and we found the foundations to correspond exactly to the walls, and the house to the foundations, place to place, site to site, space to space, at Nazareth, I say, and at Loreto." He adds: "These observations made on the spot we record for the consolation of the faithful that there may be no further room for doubt in so grave a matter."

“In the Latin version [of this document] published at Venice in 1623,” writes Chevalier, (p. 85) “while affirming the correspondence of the measurements of the Holy House of Loreto with those of the house of Nazareth, [Thomas of Novara] denies out and out the authenticity of the confrontation that is supposed to have been made by the delegates of Recanati in 1292.” This is both inaccurate and misleading, or even false. There was no delegation from Recanati to Nazareth in 1292. It was in 1296, according to Teremanus, that the sixteen delegates were sent from Recanati. Thomas of Novara refers to the confrontation made by the delegates from Tersatto, and his words are: “But how those men who were sent to Nazareth in the pontificate of Nicholas IV. (1288–94) were enabled to make this confrontation I am at a loss to know, seeing that the test which we by God’s help have made could not have been made at that time.”

The good Franciscan does but profess his ignorance of how the thing was done. He thinks it could not have been done at that time, forgetting, apparently, that it could have been done very much more easily in 1292, the year after the removal of the House, than in 1620, when the detritus of centuries had accumulated on the spot.

On Chevalier's theory that St. Mary of Loreto was an old parish church, the statement of Teremanus about the confrontation made at Nazareth would have been too absurd even to be put in words. Plainly in his time, as in the time of Thomas of Novara, it was a notorious fact that the Holy House stood without foundations at Loreto. On the hypothesis that it was a fac-simile, its model and measurements must needs have been gotten in Nazareth while the House still rested there on its own foundations. And of course foundations for the fac-simile would have been laid at Loreto. In this case, again Teremanus' statement about the confrontation made at Nazareth would have been too obviously false to be framed in speech. But let us suppose, by way of exhausting the possible suppositions, that the founder of St. Mary of Loreto, Cardinal N. de Angelis, let us say, after getting from Nazareth the requisite plan and dimensions, learned that in the meantime the House had ceased to exist there, and took it into his head to set up the fac-simile without foundations. So singular a freak in the line of building would have been a ninety-nine days' wonder, the talk of the whole neighbourhood, and the pilgrims who came thither before 1313, and even the robbers who plundered the shrine in that year, would have spread the fame of it

far and wide. The shrine, to which there was a continuous pilgrimage in the meantime, would have been known in 1430, when Teremanus came to Loreto—known and noted, as the fac-simile without foundations built by Cardinal de Angelis. It would, therefore, have been absolutely impossible for Teremanus, even supposing that he was himself utterly mendacious and dishonest, to put his account of the miraculous translation forward at all without the collusion of the whole Catholic world at the time.

On every account, then, it is plain that St. Mary of Loreto was not a fac-simile, nor ever known as such, and that Teremanus must have come by the knowledge of that which he relates in the manner that he relates—to wit, from the confrontation made at Nazareth by the delegates sent thither in 1296.

In giving the traditional dates of the miraculous translations of the Holy House at page 144, Chevalier sets down, under date of 1292: "Sending of the four Illyrian delegates from Tersatto to Nazareth to verify the respective dimensions of the ancient sanctuary and of its ancient foundations." It seems evident that "Recanati" in the passage cited on page 170 is a slip of the pen or clerical error for "Tersatto." Chevalier knew better than to put the delega-

tion from Recanati in 1292; indeed, a few lines below the words cited here from page 144, he puts it in 1296; but—something happened, and the printed page records an error that was not in his mind. Does it not look as if this were a judgment upon him for his deliberate attempt to fasten a stigma upon the memory of Pope Julius II., and discredit his testimony regarding the Holy House by drawing attention to what is a perfectly parallel slip—"Bethlehem" for "Nazareth"—in the bull of October 21, 1507? "Who," he asks, "would vouch for the truth of all the souvenirs that [Pope Julius] associates, by an enormous blunder, not with the house of *Nazareth* but with that of *Bethlehem*?" When these words were written the Canon himself was living in a glass house. And the retort upon him is obvious: Who can vouch for the truth of all that is set down by one who associates, by an enormous blunder, the confrontation made in 1292, not with the delegation, from Tersatto, but with that from Recanati?

XVIII.

Blessed Baptist of Mantua, General of the Carmelites, composed an historical sketch of the Holy House at Loreto in 1489. The first part of it, which is identical in substance with the account of Teremanus, he took down, as he tells us, almost word for word from a tablet, dust-stained and in an advanced stage of decay (*carie et pulvere paene consumpta*), that hung upon the wall of the basilica.

Chevalier wants to make it appear (without affirming it in so many words) that the tablet found by the Blessed Baptist was but one which contained the account given by Teremanus. Of this latter he says: "The original passed through numerous editions at the same period, and was hung in the form of a placard on the walls of the sanctuary. The governor, Vincent Casale, of Bologna, caused it to be translated into eight languages (p. 213)."

The writer in *L'Ami du Clergé* (Feb. 28, 1907) cites Vogel (t. 1, pp. 304-342) to show that nearly a century elapsed before the account of Teremanus was translated into eight languages, and that it was then hung up on the

walls, not of the sanctuary, but of the basilica.

Of the historical sketch given by Blessed Baptist of Mantua, Mr. Bishop writes: "The author says he obtained his information from a board worm-eaten with age and hung up in the church. At any rate it is the same account as that of Teremanus, witnesses and all, but with its style corrected and embellished (with, of course, more than one insertion of Elias and Mount Carmel), and enriched with various heightening touches on matters of fact, with some oburgation of the 'obstinate wickedness and savage manners' of the incredulous. Its most significant improvement, however, is the revision to which the depositions of Teremanus's authorities for his statements are subjected. The old man Francis of one hundred and twenty years of age, who (at the latest) in 1472 gave Teremanus details as to the translation of the House derived from the personal observation (about 1295) of the grandfather of his grandfather, becomes, in Blessed Baptist of Mantua, Francis, a man of age unspecified, who derives his information from his grandfather, an ancient man of the age of one hundred and twenty years. The subsequent historians of Loreto have gone boldly and far in the path of such improvement first and but timidly entered on by the blessed man, etc."

It is said, in homely wise, that there are more ways of killing a cat than hanging it. So, there are more ways of impeaching a man's veracity than bluntly calling him a liar. Mr. Bishop does not say openly that Blessed Baptist of Mantua was guilty of affirming the thing which was not. But he implies and insinuates that he was. The impression he gives his readers is that Blessed Baptist did but copy the account written out by Teremanus seventeen years before, with certain corrections, embellishments, and improvements of his own. But here is what Blessed Baptist himself says: "All of what we have set down above, excepting a very few things, which serve to throw light upon (*illustrant*) and do in no way vitiate the account, were word for word and faithfully transcribed, on the twenty-second day of September 1489, from an authentic copy of the tablet aforesaid, which unquestionably is a trustworthy document—*cui fides adhiberi necesse est.*"

To say that what is thus spoken of is "the same account as that of Teremanus, witnesses and all," is to say by implication that Blessed Baptist is not telling the truth. The tablet containing Teremanus's account does not appear to have been in the church in 1489, and even if it had been, it would not have been age-

worn and all but undecipherable when Blessed Baptist found it. A record graven in wood or written on parchment seventeen years before could not have been described with truth as "age-worn (*situ et vetustate corrosa*)," though exposure in a damp place (*situ*) and doubtless the fingering of the pilgrims would have soiled it somewhat. The obvious intent of the Mantuan is to establish the received account of the translation by the testimony of a document which was very old in his day, and which from his description of it must be judged to have come down from the early years of the pilgrimage. "My zeal and piety being kindled," he writes, after having come across the document in question, "I resolved to gather the details of the event [i. e. the miraculous translation] from that decayed and dust-stained placard, lest the memory of so remarkable a thing should perish through the neglect of men, by which things of greatest renown are wont to suffer obscuracion."¹ It is evident that the Mantuan set great store on the tablet because it was so old, and, deeming the testimony it bore to the miracle of the translation of great value, resolved to publish it, and so hand it on. It does not seem possible that he could use the language he uses if he had been but republish-

¹ "Notre Dame De Lorette," pp. 220-222.

ing, with notes and embellishments, the account drawn up by Teremanus only seventeen years before.

“At any rate,” urges Mr. Bishop, “it is the same account as that of Teremanus, witnesses and all.” The same account, yes, in the sense that they are both telling the same story, reciting the same facts. Also, they may well have drawn their facts from the same source, for Teremanus does not indicate the source whence he drew his. As for the witnesses, the Mantuan expressly states that the two whom he cites, and whose names he gives, were those interrogated by Teremanus, “rector,” he says, “of this sanctuary.” And what he takes down from the testimony of these witnesses does not purport to be part of what he copied from the old tablet, but rather part of what he speaks of himself as having been added to the account given on the tablet, to “throw light upon and in no way” to “vitiate” that account.

But, Mr. Bishop insists, the Mantuan subjects “the depositions of Teremanus’s authorities for his statements” to a “revision,” and thereby effects “a significant improvement.” It is not quite clear what this “improvement” is taken to be “significant” of. To me it would be especially significant of fraud on the part of the Mantuan in tampering with the account

composed by Teremanus. I must say, too, that it is not a little misleading to speak of the depositions of the two witnesses as "Teremanus's authorities for his statements." At the most, they were but subsidiary authorities, the principal ones being the holy man to whom the Blessed Virgin appeared in his sleep and the sixteen "notable and good men" that were thereupon sent by the people of Recanati to Nazareth. But my main concern here is with the charge of fraudulent tampering with a document that Mr. Bishop makes against Blessed Baptist of Mantua. He tries to screen the charge, indeed, under a figurative and euphemistic form of words—"paths of such improvement first and but timidly entered on by the blessed man." It would have been more in keeping with the blunt honesty of the English character to have said out openly what these words imply.

Now, I propose to investigate this charge. And, in order to put the facts in evidence, I shall give a literal translation first of the words of Teremanus in the form in which Chevalier sets them before us, and then of the words given by the Mantuan.

Teremanus: "Likewise the said Francis, who was a hundred and twenty years of age, told him that he visited the same church in the

same wood several times, and the same Francis related and told me the same several times. Again, we attest the credibility and certainty of this thing, how that this holy church was and stood in the said wood. And the said Francis told several trustworthy persons that the grandfather of his grandfather had a house and dwelt there, and that his house was near the said church, and that in his time it was raised up by angels from its place in the wood, and carried to the hill of the two brothers, and there set down and placed as was said above."

The Mantuan: "To the same rector, Tere-manus, Francis of Recanati, surnamed Prior, declared on oath that he heard his grandfather, who was one hundred and twenty years of age,¹ saying that he himself several times saw the church in the wood, and entered and venerated it, and that in his time it changed place and moved up to the hill of the two brothers, and moreover that his grandfather had a villa near the church while it was in the wood."

This latter is a consistent and intelligible statement. No doubt the Mantuan had before him while writing it the original text of Tere-manus's account, for both were in turn rectors

¹ These words need not be taken to mean that the grandfather was 120 years of age when he related the story to his grandson. They appear to mean rather that he reached that patriarchal age before he died.

of St. Mary of Loreto, and both accounts were written in the same place. On the other hand, Teremanus's account, as we have it, has evidently suffered at the hands of copyists. I say "evidently" without a shadow of misgiving as to my warrant for doing so. Teremanus was not a classical scholar; so much is plain from his account, which is written in the monkish Latin of the middle age. But he was a priest, and therefore a man of some education. Also, he was chosen rector of the sanctuary, a position which he held for twenty-two years, at a period when the place had acquired a world-wide fame. On the lowest ground, therefore, he must be allowed to have been blessed with at least a modicum of common sense. Now the former of the two statements cited above is self-contradictory, and what is such is seen to be so by all orders of mind. It needs but a glance to perceive the self-contradiction. In the first sentence, it is the aged Francis himself who is said to have seen the church while it was in the wood; in the third it appears to have been the grandfather of his grandfather. Moreover, what is stated in the first sentence, as I have already pointed out, was plainly impossible, and what is stated in the third sentence is plainly extravagant in the matter of time-allowance. Teremanus came to

Loreto in 1430, and it is only natural to suppose that he did not long delay to take the depositions of the witnesses. But even if we suppose that he delayed doing so till toward the end of his life, the years of the aged Francis alone would have covered fully two-thirds of the space between that date and 1295, when the narrated events occurred. It would have been, therefore, the grandfather of Francis, not his great-great-grandfather, who should have witnessed them.

Since the foregoing was written I have had myself, as related above, occasion to ascertain the correctness of the conclusion therein reached. The old English translation already cited was undoubtedly made from an authentic copy of Teremanus's account. Moreover, as Rinieri points out (Vol. III, p. 208) several manuscript copies of the account are still extant which correspond to the version above given. The text published by Chevalier is from a "variant."

Here I would direct attention to another serious blunder of Chevalier's. At page 142, he tells us that Blessed Baptist of Mantua places the miraculous translation under the Emperor Heraclius (A. D. 610-641), and gives the words of the Mantuan in a footnote, as follows: "*Sub Heraclio Romanorum imperatore. . . . Tunc*

fuit ipsum Cubiculum angelorum ministerio relictis fundamentis elevatum, etc.” But in the text of the document as cited by himself (p. 243) the words that follow “Tunc” are “etiam Mahometi invalescente perfidia, coepit Dei cultus et fides orthodoxa ab Oriente in Occidentem transmigrare. Tum quoque fuit ipsum Cubiculum Angelorum ministerio relictis fundamentis elevatum, etc.” And so, what the Mantuan dates after Mohammedanism had gained the upper hand in the East Chevalier makes him place in the reign of the Emperor Heraclius. It is just possible that, at page 142, our author had not as yet before him the full text of the Mantuan’s historical sketch, and did but use in good faith a mutilated citation. Be this as it may, the blunder is there, and it is the less pardonable in one who is so little disposed to make allowance for the slightest mistake in others.

XIX.

Just two years before the account written by Teremanus was given to the world, Pope Paul II. issued a bull of indulgence in favour of the Lauretan sanctuary (February 12, 1470). The original is said to be still in the archives of Recanati. It is one of the earliest of papal documents relating to the Holy House, and the only one that creates a real difficulty for the critical inquirer. Our author cites but an excerpt from it, which is incomplete, but even were it completed, the difficulty would remain. "Desiring," writes the Pope, "that the church of St. Mary of Loreto, miraculously founded without the walls of Recanati in honour of the same Most Holy Virgin, in which, as trustworthy persons affirm and all the faithful may know, was placed by the wonderful mercy of God an image of the self-same glorious Virgin amidst a company of attending angels," etc. This, as far as words go, would involve a two-fold miracle, one connected with the foundation of the building, the other with the placing in it of the Virgin's image. The word "image"



NO. 3—THE INTERIOR OF THE HOLY HOUSE.

(*ymago*) stands beyond any reasonable doubt for the statue of the Virgin with the Child in her arms which, as we have seen, was in the Holy House when it was plundered by brigands in 1313. The testimony of "trustworthy persons" to the miraculous placing of it in the shrine would, therefore, have to rest on a tradition coming down from the time when the shrine itself is said to have been "miraculously founded." And the words of the Pope must be read and judged in the light of that tradition. It is to the tradition that he himself appeals—"fidedignorum assertio."

Now the tradition both of Tersatto and Loreto, so far as it is known to us outside of this bull of Pope Paul II., makes the House itself of the Virgin to have come from Tersatto. All the early historians of the Holy House, Teremanus, who was a contemporary of this Pope, and had exceptional opportunities of knowing the tradition, having served in the sanctuary for 43 years, the greater part of that time as rector, Blessed Baptist of Mantua, Angelita, Riera, and, in Dalmatia, Glavinich and Pasconio, all attest this. Besides these we find, before the close of the 15th century, Jerome of Raggiolo, a monk of Vallombrosa,¹ Antonio Bonfini, who superintended the schools

¹ "Notre Dame De Lorette," pp. 320-222.

of Recanati from October 1478 to September 1486,¹ Francis Suriano and his sister Sixta, the latter of whom says it was "believed by everybody" that the chapel "known down to this day as St. Mary of Loreto" had been miraculously conveyed over seas from Nazareth,² also Louis Lazzarelli, an Italian poet crowned about the year 1488, in a Latin poem,⁴ all witnessing to the tradition of the miraculous translation of the sanctuary itself. It will be remembered, too, that Urban VI., in the bull promulgated by his successor Boniface IX in 1389, lays stress on "the great veneration" in which the Church itself of St. Mary of Loreto was held, grants an indulgence specially for the purpose of inciting the faithful to "honour in a befitting way and resort to it," while he has never a word at all to say about the image.

The tradition of two peoples is thus clean against the statement contained in the bull of Paul II. respecting the image of the Virgin, if we take that statement necessarily to mean that the image was translated independently of the House. What is more, the bull itself contains another statement which is, at least by implication, in disaccord with it, and, on the other hand, in accord with the tradition. For

¹ Ib. p. 222.² Ib. p. 236.³ Ib. pp. 237-238.

the Pope declares the church of St. Mary of Loreto to have been “miraculously founded.” These words may fairly be understood as pointing to the fact that the House stood, as it still stands, without foundations on the bare earth. Now this implies that it was not built on the spot, but brought thither from where it rested on its own foundations. So reasons Luigi Lazzarelli in the poem mentioned above:

*Fundamenta domus supra apparentia terram
Respice; non illo structa fuere loco.*

Which rudely rhymed, runs in English:

*Behold its walls on naked earth appear;
N'er builded on that spot were they, 'tis clear.*

It may be urged that the words of the bull are “miraculously founded in honour of the Blessed Virgin Mary,” and that the latter phrase implies the Pope’s mind to have been that some devout client of Mary set up the building at Loreto itself in her honour, and that some miracle was in some way or other connected with its foundation. In an abstract point of view, this would be the more likely interpretation of the words. But we have to do with a definite statement about a definite building which was known at the time, as it is known to-day, to stand without foundations. The

Pope's words must therefore be understood of the physical act of foundation, or of the state of the building as founded or fixed there. For the rest, whether the building were set up on the spot by men, or set down there by angels, the foundation would be equally "in honour of the Blessed Virgin Mary."

How the statement respecting the Virgin's image ever came to be inserted in a papal bull is a mystery of which I have sought, but sought in vain, some explanation. Here is plainly no mere slip of the pen or clerical error, as is "Bethlehem" for "Nazareth" in the bull of Julius II., though one who knows the genesis of such documents will have no difficulty in tracing the words to another than the Pope's own hand. However it be, thus much is certain: to make Bethlehem the scene of the Incarnation would be no more clearly opposed to the testimony of the Gospels than the coming of the Virgin's image to Loreto, independently of the House, would be opposed to constant tradition and the testimony of contemporary and quasi-contemporary writers. The only miraculous translation to Loreto which is vouched for by any "trustworthy persons" whose testimony has come down to us is that of the House itself and whatever was inside of it.

The bull of Feb. 12, 1470, was followed in less

than a year by another of the same Pope's, dated January 25, 1471. Succeeding Popes cite from this latter bull a passage that reproduces, almost word for word, the statement about the Virgin's image contained in the former one. But the very first of them to cite this passage, Julius II. namely, takes occasion, further on, to remove the misconception to which it might give rise. "We," are the words he uses, "bearing in mind (*attendentes*) that not only was there in the said church of Loreto an image of the Blessed Virgin Mary but also, according to a pious belief resting on tradition (*ut pie creditur et fama est*) the chamber or sleeping room where the same Blessed Virgin was conceived, and brought up," etc. He goes on to give the story of the successive translations of the Holy House. The wording of the passage—"attendentes (taking note of)," "not only," "but also," as well as the use of the past tense (*erat*)—seems to convey a tacit reference to the corresponding passage in Pope Paul's bull with a view of correcting, or at any rate of rightly interpreting, the same. It may not be amiss to point out, too, that the word "church," as used by Pope Julius, means the great basilica built round the Holy House, whereas, in the bull of Paul II., it means the Holy House itself.

In a bull dated June 1, 1519, Pope Leo X.

speaks of both "image and chamber" as having been miraculously translated from Nazareth, and says that this is "established by the testimony of trustworthy persons (*ut fide dignorum comprobatum est testimonio*)."

As yet the miracle of the translation from Nazareth is not affirmed categorically in any papal document. In other words, the Popes themselves do not vouch for it, but simply say that it rests on the testimony of persons worthy of belief. Sixtus V. is, as Mr. Bishop observes, "the first Pope to assert the authenticity, as matter of fact and without saving clause, of the Holy House of Loreto." This he did in a bull dated March 17, 1586. In 1669 the feast of the miraculous translation of the Holy House was inserted in the Roman Martyrology, but it was not till 1699 that the office of the feast was approved as we have it to-day.

Those who impugn the miraculous translation make capital of Rome's tardy recognition of it. But has not slowness, and what might almost seem an excess of caution, always distinguished Rome's action in such matters? *Festina lente*—*Make haste slowly* has been from the first an honoured maxim at Rome, and in this case, if ever, there was need of living up to it. Common prudence would dictate that an event so out of the common even among mira-

cles should not be pronounced certain without convincing evidence of its having actually taken place. Moreover, two distinct points had to be established: (1) that the building known as "the Church of St. Mary of Loreto" had not been constructed at Loreto, but had come thither from some other place; (2) that the building was in reality the holy house of Nazareth. The living tradition of the place, the fame and antiquity of the pilgrimage, the quality of the stone and mortar of the building, the monuments of its stay in the wood and on the hill of the brothers Antici, above all the notorious and incontestable fact that it stood there without foundations, would have placed the first point beyond the pale of reasonable doubt. Hence it is that Pope Paul II., in 1470, does not hesitate to affirm, without qualification of any sort, that St. Mary of Loreto was "miraculously founded." But what building it was and whence it had come—this was not so easily determined. True, the tradition of the place, as we have seen, identified it with the House of Nazareth, carried thence, with the statue of the Virgin that stood within it, by angels. But documentary evidence was wanting. The original of the official document drawn up on the return of the sixteen delegates from Nazareth in 1296 had perished in 1322, together

with "almost all the ancient documents of the Church of Recanati," as Vogel testifies, the public archives having been destroyed by fire that year in the sack of Recanati by the pontifical troops.¹ And no doubt there were many who did not accept the tradition, and who, like Suriano a little later, believed that "the real house of the Virgin" was the grotto shown to pilgrims at Nazareth. On the other hand, Loreto was a place of "miracles almost without number," as Pope Paul himself attests; and he "in his own person had experienced" the grace of miraculous healing at St. Mary's shrine.² What then? The tradition could not be wholly false, and therefore the "testimony of trustworthy persons" could be cited for the miraculous translation of at least the Virgin's image, the more so, perhaps, that the image was the special object of popular devotion. I venture to put this forward here as a possible explanation of what in the earlier part of the paper was set down as a mystery which baffled all attempt at solving.

Let us assume for argument's sake that the contention of our opponents is well founded. Let us suppose the tradition of Loreto really to have been in 1470, when Paul II. wrote his

¹ "De ecclesiis Recanat, et Lauret," p. 4.

² "Notre Dame de Lorette," p. 202.

bull, that the image had been conveyed thither in a miraculous manner, independently of the House. On this supposition (1) Teremanus, in affirming that it was not, himself lied egregiously, and suborned false witnesses to support the lie; (2) the whole Catholic world adopted his lying account in the teeth of the Papal attestation of the old and well-known tradition to the contrary; (3) the successors of Paul II. in the See of Peter adopted and endorsed the same lying account. If this be so, then mighty is mendacity, for it has prevailed.

Mr. Bishop (*The Tablet*, Nov. 17, 1906,) notes as significant the omission of all reference to the miraculous translation in "Leo's great bull of August 1, 1518," but says the "omission is in some measure made good in a brief of June 1, 1519," as cited above. I can discern no significance whatever in the omission. Perhaps it is to make it appear of less weight than the bull of August 1, 1518, that Mr. Bishop describes the document of June 1, 1519, as a "brief." Whether or no, it is not a brief, but a bull. It bears all the outward marks of this latter class of document. It begins, "Leo, bishop, servant of God's servants: for a perpetual remembrance," and is dated "in the year of the Lord's incarnation," as bulls always are. On the other hand, a brief begins with such words as

“Leo X, pope,” and, instead of having a leaden seal (bullæ, whence the name) attached, bears upon it the mark of the Pope’s signet-ring, “the seal of the Fisherman.” Hence it always has at the end, just before the day of the month and the year, where the bull has “anno Incarnationis dominicæ,” the words “sub annulo Piscatoris, under the seal of the Fisherman.”

We shall next see that documents brought to light at Loreto and a fresh confrontation made at Nazareth before the middle of the 16th century, warranted the categorical declaration of the authenticity of the Holy House of Loreto by Sixtus V. in 1586.

XX.

Until the sixteenth century the miraculous translation of the Holy House of Loreto, so far at least as is known to-day, rested on local tradition only. True, Blessed Baptist of Mantua, in 1489, cites a tablet, dust-stained and decayed, which he found in the basilica. But the history written on this tablet, though authentic, was without date or name of author, and therefore will hardly pass muster in our exacting age. It was reserved for Jerome Angelita, from 1509 to 1561 Chancellor of the commune of Recanati, to set the account of the miraculous translation on an historical basis.

The documents which certify the authenticity of the Holy House of Loreto were drawn by Angelita from two sources. "As chancellor," writes Mr. Garratt, he had access to everything that remained [in the archives of Recanati], and to the archives of neighbouring cities, and to documents relating to the Holy House that were kept in private families of note. He received also, from Fiume and Tersatto, manuscripts that were sent to the magistrates of

Recanati; and thus he was enabled to compose a complete account, with the exact dates of the arrival of the Holy House at Tersatto, and afterwards at Loreto. His researches are very valuable; the information is drawn, he assures us, 'from the ancient annals of that city, which he had attentively examined'; and, as he wrote under the eyes of the magistrates of Recanati, all that he states in his circumstantial history of the *Santa Casa* has the ratification of the civil authorities." ¹

The most important document which Angelita's researches brought to light was a copy of the official report drawn up at Recanati on the return of the delegates sent to Nazareth in 1296. Raphael Riera (A. D. 1565) and Tursellini (A. D. 1594), in their histories of the Holy House, attest that copies of this report still existed in their day. Under the year 1296 Vogel writes: "A document of this date is cited by Jerome Angelita, Tursellini, and others, but I believe it is no longer extant. It contained the testimony of sixteen men of noble lineage who are said to have been sent to Palestine from all the country round about Recanati to ascertain the truth of the translation." ²

¹ "Loreto : The New Nazareth," p. 227.

² Cited by Cardinal Bartolini, "Sopra la Santa Casa di Loreto," p. 22.

Another document of not less importance, was brought from Tersatto to Recanati while Angelita was chancellor of that commune, and is cited by him in his work. "During the pontificate of Leo X.," he tells us, "certain trustworthy Illyrians brought a manuscript copy from the annals of Fiume, a town situated on the opposite shore of the Adriatic, which contained an account of the first miraculous translation from Nazareth of this House (*Cubiculi*). And this was made known to his Holiness [Leo X] in a letter from the commune of Recanati."¹ The observation of the learned Cardinal Lambruschini, afterwards Benedict the Fourteenth, on this point, is just, and must commend itself to every person who possesses what Newman calls "that common manly frankness by which we put confidence in others, till they are proved to have forfeited it."² "The loss of these annals matters little," he writes, ". . . for we ought to have confidence in distinguished historians such as Angelita and Tursellini, who had them in their hands when they wrote their history, and drew their accounts from them after the manner of Dionysius of Halicarnassus, who composed his work on Roman antiquities, after having

¹ "Notre Dame de Lorette," p. 315.

² *Apologia pro Vita Sua*, ed. of 1865, p. 318.

prepared it for twenty-four years, partly by conversation with learned men, partly by consulting the memoirs of distinguished writers of preceding ages. And is not Dionysius a great authority, although the documents he consulted have disappeared?" Angelita composed his work some time between 1525 and 1528. In 1531 he presented a copy of it, with a dedicatory preface, to Pope Clement VII., who deposited it in the Vatican library, where Martorelli found it in 1730.²

The Blessed Peter Canisius, S. J., a contemporary of Angelita, testifies that he was "a man of strict honesty (*vir valde syncerus*) and most diligent in searching out information bearing on the history" of the Holy House. Chevalier cites this "eulogy," as he calls it, and has the hardihood to declare that it "is certainly undeserved. To say plainly and bluntly what I think," he adds, "the narrative of this historian does not seem to me to carry any guarantee of truth."³ The assumption of the man who penned these words is simply amazing. Blessed Peter Canisius, a contemporary, as we have said, who had every opportunity of knowing about Angelita, gives him

¹ "De Serv. Dei, Beatif.," l. 3, c. 10, n. 5.

² "Notre Dame de Lorette," p. 313; "La Sainte Maison de Lorette," by Abbe. Milochau, p. 65.

³ P. 314.

a high character for uprightness and industry in research. But our omniscient critic is quite sure that the learned and saintly Jesuit did not know anything about him, or, at any rate, that there is not a word of truth in what he says of him. Now he says two things: (1) that Angelita was an upright man; (2) that he showed great industry in searching out and compiling the records extant in his day about the Holy House. Angelita's industry at least there is no gain-saying; the work that he has left behind him is a monument of this. Therefore Chevalier's "certainly undeserved" is too sweeping, too indiscriminating. One of the first things a critic should learn is to weigh his words. And the very first thing he should learn—if nature has been unkind to him, or his early training has been defective—is that no man's word is to be called in question save upon clear and positive proof that he is not telling the truth. What proof has Chevalier got, what proof does he give that Angelita is not telling the truth when he says that he came into possession of important documents relating to the Holy House? No proof whatever—not one shred of positive proof. He has absolutely nothing to bear out his charge of forgery and falsehood against Angelita but that the latter, and the historians of the Holy House who came after him,

Riera and Tursellini in Loreto, Glavinich and Pasconio in Dalmatia, are the first ones who cite, or seem to know of the existence, of such documents. Vogel, a true critic, says, as we have seen, of the copy of the official report of the magistrates of Recanati: "*Angelita, Tursellini, and others, cite a document of this date, but I believe it no longer exists.*" If he had been trained in the latter-day school of criticism, what he would have said is: *Angelita, Tursellini, and others, cite a document of this date, but I am quite positive it never existed!* With Newman and all honourable men, I prefer "that common manly frankness" which puts confidence in others till they are proved to have forfeited it.

Both Teremanus and Blessed Baptist of Mantua say that a deputation went from Recanati to Tersatto and Nazareth in 1296. Their testimony is worthless, says Chevalier: it lacks documentary proof. Angelita says he found a copy of the document drawn up on their return, quotes from it, and gives their itinerary. He found nothing of the kind, says Chevalier: he forged the whole account himself. Riera and Tursellini say they saw copies of the same document. They lie, says Chevalier. Again, Angelita says that while he was chancellor of Recanati a deputation came from Tersatto bear-

ing a manuscript copy from the annals of Fiume, which contained full particulars of the translation of the Holy House from Nazareth to that place in 1291 and that the magistrates of Recanati notified by letter Pope Leo X of the fact. It is all a tissue of lies, says Chevalier; no such annals ever existed, no such deputation ever came to Recanati, no such letter was ever sent to the Pope. And yet Angelita was chancellor of Recanati at the time, wrote from personal knowledge, and what he wrote about was, of its very nature, public and notorious. On the other hand, Chevalier is not able to produce one scintilla of positive evidence in disproof. He has nothing but so-called "negative evidence"; the cited documents are nowhere to be found to-day; therefore they never existed; therefore Angelita was a liar and forgerer. This is bad logic; and it is lawless criticism; and it is cowardly slander of the dead. Let him try to bolster up a charge of lying and forgery against the least of living men in this way, and he will soon learn that society has an effective means of vindicating the good name of its members from such wanton assault.

"Angelito," says Chevalier, "does not confine himself to improving the literary form of the narrative of the translation, without changing the sequence of it, though this is what he

affirms. To say nothing of the embellishments, he specifies not only the day but the hour of the several translations; the first took place in 1291 'near the town of Tersatto, after the ninth of May, about the second vigil of the night.'"¹

Now Angelita does not affirm that he confined himself to bettering the style of the narrative, as appears from the words cited from him by Chevalier himself at the foot of the page. He says he "sought to throw some fresh light upon it (*conatus fuerim aliquantisper illustrare*)."¹ Is Chevalier so ignorant of Latin as not to know what "*rei seriem illustrare*" means? The salient facts of the narrative in their orderly sequence (*rei seriem*), i. e. the successive translations of the Holy House, were already known. Angelita professes to put them in a clearer light (*illustrare*) by furnishing new evidence and dealing with them in a fashion somewhat (*aliquantisper*) more detailed. Both the new evidence and the details were supplied by the documents which had come from Tersatto as well as by those that he himself discovered in and about Recanati. And if these documents gave the exact dates of the successive translations, why should not Angelita give them too? Both Chevalier and Mr. Bishop seem to regard his giving details and exact dates as proof

¹p. 316.

positive that Angelita forged the documents. "The subsequent historians of Loreto," says the latter," have gone boldly and far in the paths of such improvement first and but timidly [oh!] entered on by the blessed man [Baptist of Mantua]. . . Thus Jerome Angelita, . . . adduces ancient annals of the republic of Fiume (otherwise unknown) and gives much detailed history that is quite new about the Holy House whilst in Dalmatia. He also fixes the exact dates of events, thus: etc." Even if Angelita were the only one who adduced those ancient annals, as Mr. Bishop alleges, his having adduced them would by the ordinary canons of history go to prove their existence. But Mr. Bishop's parenthetical statement that the annals in question are "otherwise unknown" is as I shall now show, egregiously untrue.

XXI.

In saying that, but for Angelita's citation of them, the annals of Fiume are "otherwise unknown," Mr. Bishop was no doubt misled by Chevalier, who has a way of passing over in silence or keeping back testimony that makes against his thesis. The existence of these annals is attested by three other witnesses, Riera in Italy, Glavinich and Pasconio in Dalmatia. Riera, Mr. Garratt tells us, "wrote before the archives of the monastery of Tersatto perished in a fire; and from those archives he received an authentic copy of the report of Don Alexander and his three fellow-delegates, who went to Nazareth [in 1292]." ¹ In his *History of the Madonna of Tersatto*, published in 1648, Glavinich assures us that he had himself made notes from the original document.² The account given by Pasconio is certified by the magistrates of Fiume to be in exact accord on every point with the ancient manuscripts and the archives of the monastery of Tersatto.³

¹ pp. 227-228.

² p. 229.

³ lb.

This seems a fitting place to say a word about the tradition of Tersatto. The existence of this tradition is attested by the two writers last-mentioned, the latter of whom declares it to have been "constant and uninterrupted" and "handed on to us from the men who were eye-witnesses of so great a prodigy."¹ It is also attested by the monuments and inscriptions that are still to be seen there. A facsimile of the Holy House stands in the choir of the church of St. George at Tersatto, on the spot where the house itself originally rested. The present one, built in 1614 by Francis Glavinich, cited above, who was guardian of the Franciscan monastery attached to the church, took the place of an older one said to have been erected by Count Nicholas Frangipani on the site which the Holy House had quitted in 1294. On the north wall of the chapel is inscribed an ancient hymn, embodying the local tradition. "The clergy and people," says Mr. Garratt, who made the pilgrimage of Tersatto in 1891, "still sing the ancient hymn: 'O Mary here didst thou come with thy House to dispense grace as the loving Mother of Christ. Nazareth was thy cradle, but when thou didst seek a new country, Tersatto was thy first harbour. Thou hast

¹ Cited by Chevalier, p. 318, footnote.

borne away thy holy Dwelling hence, but Queen of Mercy, thou hast none the less remained with us.”¹ There is also an ancient inscription in another chapel built on the steps leading up from Fiume to Tersatto: “The House of the Blessed Virgin Mary came from Nazareth to Tersatto on May 10, 1291, and left on December 10, 1294.” Glavinich tells us that the stone tablet on which those words were graven was ancient in his time, and adds: “We hold by tradition that this chapel on the steps was erected at the time of the translation into Italy; it has been restored several times since.”²

From time immemorial the people of Dalmatia have been in the habit of making the pilgrimage of Loreto, where time and time again they have borne public and pathetic testimony to their ancestral tradition. Riera, an eye-witness, describes a pilgrimage in 1559: “Three, or perhaps even five, hundred of these pilgrims came to Loreto with their wives and children. . . . They entered the basilica in two

O Maria,
Huc cum domo advenisti
Ut qua pia Mater Christi
Dispensares gratiam
Naxarethum tibi ortus,
Sed Tersactum primum portus
Petenti hanc patriam.

Aedem quidem hinc tulisti,
Attamen hic permansisti
Regina clementiae

² Cited by Garratt, p. 177.

lines upon their knees, and weeping cried out, 'Return to us with thy House, O Mary.' " ¹ "It would be impossible," observes Mr. Garratt "to make a stay at Tersatto at any time of the year and not come to the conclusion that the inhabitants and the pilgrims from surrounding countries are most profoundly convinced of the sanctity of this spot—a sanctity that depends entirely upon the truth of the translation of the Holy House from Nazareth to this place." ²

Both Mr. Bishop and Canon Chevalier fight shy of this tradition of Tersatto. The problem it raises for them they are unable to grapple with successfully, and so they deliberately ignore it. But the problem remains, and still clamors for solution at their hands. On their theory, that St. Mary of Loreto was an old parish church, or a fac-simile of the Holy House of Nazareth, how account for the fac-simile at Tersatto and the tradition that is entwined about it?

The translation of the Holy House from Nazareth to Tersatto is affirmed by Teremanus (1472), by Jerome of Raggiolo (1478), by Antonio Bonfini (1478), by Luigi Lazzarelli in his Latin poem (1488), by Blessed Baptist of Mantua (1489), and by Pope Julius II., in his bull of

¹Cited by Garratt, p. 180.

²p. 189.

October 21, 1507. Hence we may with absolute certainty conclude that the tradition of the miraculous translation to Tersatto existed in Tersatto itself before the close of the fifteenth century. For, if it had not, the statement thus repeatedly made in public documents would have been received in Dalmatia with amazement, and would have evoked a chorus of denial. "Passing strange it is," the people of Dalmatia would have said, "that the Virgin's House should have come to our shores and we should neither know nor have ever heard anything about it." Without the shadow of a doubt, then, the tradition existed. Again I ask: How account for its existence? The tradition of Loreto itself, supported as it is by the fact that the House is there without foundations, as well as by the memorials of its stay in the wood and on the hill of the two brothers, has taxed to the utmost the ingenuity of the critics in framing hypotheses and inventing explanations. I have discussed the original hypothesis with its many variants, and have pointed out the futility of the explanations. It was discreet of our critics to give the tradition of Tersatto as wide a berth as possible. But it does not speak well for their love of truth or their devotion to science. It is the business of the man of science to

investigate facts. He can not consistently with his profession shut his eyes to a single fact, even if it does clash with some cherished hypothesis. Now the tradition in question is a fact as certain as any that history records. And it is a fact that can not at all be accounted for on the hypothesis of our opponents. That they do not even attempt to account for it is evidence of this.

It is true that Chevalier, toward the end of his book (p. 489), puts forward what he himself calls a "mere conjecture" on this point. But it is by way of accounting for what was affirmed at Loreto about the translation of the Holy House to and from Tersatto that the conjecture is put forward. In 1468, a Venetian architect, Marino Marci, supposed to have been of Dalmatian origin from the appellation of "Jadera (Zara)", undertook the work of building the basilica at Loreto. This, conjectures Chevalier, "gave rise to the legend of the stay of the Holy House in Dalmatia."

There might have been some semblance of plausibility about this conjecture, if Marino Marci had come to Loreto a century or two before the time of Teremanus. But he came in 1468, while Teremanus was rector of the *Santa Casa*, and entered into a contract for work on

the basilica in 1471,¹ the year before Teremanus published the account in which the stay of the Holy House at Tersatto is in set terms affirmed. Chevalier says that Teremanus forged this account, which would make him a knave. The present conjecture, on the other hand, would make him a fool; for it would have been the height of folly to put forward the statement about the stay of the Holy House in Dalmatia under the very eyes of the man whose Dalmatian origin is supposed to have furnished the only foundation for it. Now as a man can not be both knave and fool at the same time, seeing that a fool hasn't wit enough to be wicked, it follows that Teremanus was—neither. He could not have been a knave, so far at least as regards the forging of this particular item in his account, without being a fool also. The very fact that he did put forward the statement in the presence of a Dalmatian is by itself evidence that the tradition then existed in Dalmatia.

"The removal of the Holy House from Tersatto," justly observes Mr. Garratt, "has greatly increased the proofs of its removal from Nazareth. The inhabitants own that they have only an imitation at Tersatto; they say that the genuine House abandoned them. The

¹ "Notre Dame de Lorette," p. 231, footnote.

Translation into Italy must then be a real event, for they acknowledge a great humiliation, such as no impostor could foist into the traditions of any people."

CANON CHEVALIER'S REPLY.

I.

Canon Chevalier, on learning that the foregoing critique of his work had appeared in *The Casket*, sent for the numbers of that paper which contained it, and in due time received them. His reply, written in French and done into English by Arthur Preuss, was first published in *The Catholic Fortnightly Review* and thence, at his own instance, reproduced in *The Casket* of December 24, 1907, January 9 and 30, 1908. It runs as follows [the footnotes are mine]:

The *Rassegna Nazionale*, publishing in its number of September first an article by Marquis Carlo Nembrini Gonzaga, entitled *Ancora della S. Casa di Loreto* (Florence, 1907, 10 pp. octavo), precedes the same by an editorial note promising in the near future an essay on the mental capacity of the adherents of the legend. The most recent of these, Canon Augusto Monachesi, had his response to the article of Mons. A. de la Matina (who combated the conclusions of Msgr. Faloci Pulignani) refused because he had dipped his pen in the citric ink (*inchiostro limaccioso*) which had been employed by all others of his ilk, advocates of a lost cause, unscientific

people, without preparation, without acumen, without sincerity, without good faith.

I do not wish to apply these qualifying phrases to all my opponents, but among reasonable people it is recognized that in this controversy all limits have been passed, and Christian charity has been unscrupulously violated. Criticism has at all times been directed against superstitions which laid claim to a historical basis. Even after the extremely explicit brief of Leo XIII, Msgr. Duchesne considered it legitimate to maintain and demonstrate in the most positive manner that the apostolate of St. James in Spain remained unknown until the ninth century. For this he was not blamed from any other quarter, nor was there any attempt at refutation. I am ignorant as to the effect of his discovery upon the Spaniards, but I am quite certain that its echo did not resound through both worlds.

Why has it been otherwise with my *Etude historique sur la S. Casa*? I enjoined myself many times from assuming a tone which might irritate, and I did not hesitate to make a sacrifice of certain personal allusions. On this point learned men thought me too lenient in the case of certain falsifiers of the stripe of Torsellini. If my work was unimportant as it has been sought to demonstrate, the better course would have been to allow it to drop into oblivion, and I would have been the last to protest. Why this avalanche of refutation—which is far from being at an end? Is it not because a place of devotion is being considered more or less as if it were a dogmatic truth, the authenticity of which each one of the faithful believes himself bound to defend? How account in any other way for the fact that nine-tenths of my opponents have attempted to refute my book without having either read it or attempted to look at it? They have naturally attributed to me every imaginable ignorance and error. Anonymous articles composed under the sway of these preconceived notions have appeared in

divers diocesan weeklies. I have replied to such as have been brought to my notice. Other periodicals, which have reproduced the attacks, did not have the fairness to set the reply before their readers. Even those who have read my book have been very careful not to give an exact idea of it in reproducing abstracts of it. They have confined themselves to quarreling with some detail, if indeed they have not set forth on a search for errors in my other works (and who has not made mistakes?). In short, an unfair war has been waged against the author, in which the main object has been to belittle him instead of its being to discover documents in favour of the authenticity of the Holy House.

The theological prepossession which I have pointed out above has no justification. In order properly to inform one's self on this head it is sufficient to read the two decrees of the Sacred Congregation of Rites, of scarcely thirty years ago, which I have reproduced (p. 411). In granting the office of an apparition or revelation, the Holy See does not have the intention of approving it: it is "*tantum permissa tanquam pie credenda fide solum humana, juxta piam, uti perhibent, traditionem etiam idoneis testimoniis et monumentis confirmatam.*"

The concessions of this Congregation as regards liturgy do not in any way enjoy effect of the pontifical infallibility. They do not by any means guaranty the historic accuracy of the legends in the divine office. That is the rule. As a matter of fact the popes have many times corrected the Roman Breviary. Leo XIII did so recently in large measure. These corrections suppose previous research on the part of learned men. I have elsewhere (p. 410) pointed out that the particular concession of the office of the translation of the Holy House of Loreto gives it even less value than if it formed part of the body of the Breviary.

"A hundred or two hundred years ago," Msgr. d'Hulst wrote in 1896, "the piety of the enlightened among the

faithful was in sympathy with the severities of the critical school, whereas to-day it is scandalized by them. . . . The historian would go out of his province were he to presume to impose his conclusions upon science; the faithful would go out of theirs, were they to presume to dictate affirmations to science." (p. 486). And yet we have returned to that axiom of the interpolator of the *Annales mundi* of Philippus Brietius: the piety of the majority should not yield to science and to investigation (p. 397). Taking the objections in the CASKET in conjunction with the criticisms in the *Ami du Clergé*, many of the faithful might be convinced that there is not a single sound page in my book—that I have erred all along the line. This is not astonishing; it was even inevitable that it should come about. My theologian opponents are familiar with the axiom: "Bonum ex integra causa malum ex quocumque defectu."¹ It suffices for the demolition of the cause of the legend that one only of my arguments against the authenticity of the Holy House be unimpeachable, granted even that it were possible to demonstrate the worthlessness of all my other proofs.

It is commonly said that no work is so poor as to be absolutely devoid of good points. My adversaries are of the contrary opinion as far as I am concerned—in this instance all is bad. This intentional exaggeration is enough to prove the fallacy of their argumentation. It is not necessary for me to introduce myself to American Catholics. Nevertheless, they will allow me to inform them that I have laboured in the field of historical research for forty years. When, in 1903, my friends desired to celebrate the completion of my chief work, one of them compiled my bibliography, which, at that time, amounted to 466 numbers. This is not the place to

¹An ethical maxim, the meaning of which is that an action is bad if it lacks any element essential to its being good.

state, even in abstract, the contents of this list. The principal series comprise eighteen volumes on the history of the Dauphiné, twelve volumes of a *Liturgical Library*, and, especially to be mentioned, my *Catalogue of Historical Sources of the Middle Ages*, which merited for me a letter of congratulation from the President of the United States, Mr. Theodore Roosevelt. In 1902 the Académie des Inscriptions et Belles-Lettres de France awarded to me one of its two highest honours (the prix Estrade-Delcros). Msgr. Battandier has proclaimed me as the "most learned man in France and perhaps in the world." (*Etudes ecclésiastiques*). This praise is undoubtedly exaggerated, I know, but it has its value, coming as it does from an opponent.

I do not wish to fail in respect for any one, but I have searched in vain for the scientific credentials of my adversaries. The term *Science* implies the assembling of an amount of knowledge acquired by prolonged study of the matter in hand, and, when there is question of establishing the status of an event lost in the dim distance of the Middle Ages and deprived of documentary evidence, particular dextrousness and consummate skill are required. Special schools exist where these things are learned and there are also groups of learned men who admit within their circle those who have given unmistakable proofs of their penetration and industry. These qualities and conditions are, to my regret, absent from my opponents, though, in contrast, I find them conspicuous in those who have written estimates of my book in the learned reviews. For instance, I may cite Msgr. P. M. Baumgarten in the *Historisch politische Blätter für das katholische Deutschland*; Msgr. Charles Bellet in the *Revue d'histoire ecclésiastique* (Louvain: published separately); the Reverend Fathers G. Allmang, in the *Historisches Jahrbuch* (published separately); Stephan Beissel, in the *Stimmen aus Maria-Laach*; Vismer Berlière in the *Revue Bénédictine*; Mod. Blin, in the *Revue*

Augustienne; Leop. de Feis in the *Revista delle scienze teologiche*; A. Kross, in the *Zeitschrift für katholische Theologie*; M. J. Lagrange, in the *Revue Biblique*; Charles de Smedt in the *Analecta Bollandiana*; (published separately); B. Zimmerman, in the *Irish Ecclesiastical Record*; Canons J. A. Chevalier, in *Demain* (published separately); A. Grospellier, in the *Rassegna Gregoriana*; Abbés A. Boudinhon, in the *Revue du Clergé Français*; Aug. Gambaro, in the *Rivista di scienze storiche* (published separately) and in *Studium*; the Rev. J. Mearns, in the *The Guardian*; Messrs. Edw. Bishop, in *The Tablet* (published separately); Leon Clugnet, in the *Polybiblion*; H. Francois Delaborde, in the *Journal des Savants*; Léop. Delisle, in the *Comptes Rendus de l'Académie des Inscriptions et Belles-Lettres*; Paul Fournier, in the *Bulletin critique*; von Funk, in the *Theologische Quartalschrift*; J. Guiraud, in the *Revue pratique d'apologétique*; Herm Hoffman in the *Anzeiger für die gesamte katholische Geistlichkeit per Diocese Breslau*; *Kölnische Volkszeitung*; E. G. Ledos in the *Revue des Questions historiques*; G. de M. in the *Journal des Débates*; Arthur Preuss, in the *Catholic Fortnightly Review*; Alf. Professione, in *La Cultura*; S. R., in the *Revue archéologique*; *Studi Religiosi*; Ch. Sustrac, in the *Bibliothèque de l'Ecole des Chartes*; F. Teichmann, in the *Wissenschaftliche Beilage zur Germania*.

All these have accepted without restriction my conclusions and have registered no objection to the force of my chain of arguments. Not, let me hasten to add, that I claim for my *Etude* complete exemption from error and from missing links, but, were these to be corrected and supplied in a new edition, the final estimation of my work would be in no wise altered.

However to turn to the notices of my book in the scientific reviews, who would be so bold as to affirm that all these learned men, each one speaking with com-

petence on a subject of which they have made a study, should be mistaken and that their opinion should be held as of no account. This would be to reverse the rules of probability.

Moreover, I have on my side an authority even more special and still greater, if that be possible. It is known that Dr. George Huffer, who presided at the fifth international Congress of Catholic Scientists held at Munich in 1900, was preparing—before me—a work on the Santa Casa of Loreto. Dr. Lapponi, more conversant than anyone else with the researches of Dr. Huffer, declared a short time before his death that these investigations would prove to be even more convincing than mine. In what sense? French papers, like *La Croix* of Paris, taking their dreams for realities, pretended that they awaited with impatience the appearance of the promised treatise. I am in a position to relieve them of this illusion. After congratulating me on my vigorous campaign for disembarassing the Church of a legend without historical foundation, Dr. Huffer assured me that his own conclusions were identical with mine. The unsatisfactory state of his health had alone prevented him from finishing and publishing his work.

I said above—and it cannot be gainsaid that, in order to bring to the ground the scaffolding of hypotheses by means which the legend of the miraculous translation is supported, it is sufficient to adduce one conclusive argument against the legend. If, for example, it be proved that the materials from which the Santa Casa is constructed come from quarries in the neighborhood of Loreto, it is superfluous to discuss the question of the destruction or permanence of the Holy House at Nazareth. Beginning in the month of July, 1905, Dr. Schafer, of the Institute of the Gorres-Gesellschaft, has examined the walls of the chapel of Loreto, in behalf of Dr. Huffer, and decided absolutely against the legend. Now the Marquis Nembrini Gonzaga of Ancona has just

proceeded to a new verification on the spot with the following results: First of all, the statement, reiterated by the defenders of the legend, that there are no stone quarries in the environs of Loreto is false, since Mt. Conero, a few miles distant, contains many of them, and from the materials obtained there the towns of Ancona, Recanati, and Loreto itself were paved. From these same materials the houses all along the sea-board of the province of the Marches have been built—at Poggio, Sirolo, Umana, etc. Walking recently through the building sheds of the Humbert I. Hospital, now in course of construction at Ancona, Marquis Nembrini Gonzaga was struck with the remarkable resemblance between the stones cut for the edifice and those of the Holy House at Loreto, which he had just examined attentively. Here was the same reddish colour which has deceived so many people since Suriano into thinking that the Holy House was built of brick. Here also was the same very fine grain, and, a feature even more characteristic, the stones were naturally cut in the form of irregular parallelepipeds, like those seen at Loreto. A chemical analysis of this stone has been taken by Dr. M. Cassetti (*Appunti, geologici del Monte Conero presso Ancona, Roma, 1905*), who finds it to be composed of carbonate of chalk, carbonate of magnesia, and ferruginous white clay. This agrees with the analysis of the material of the Holy House, made in 1857 by Professor Francesco Ratti, on the part of Cardinal Bartolini.

¹“Tutti costituiti da carbonato di calce, carbonato di magnesia, e da argilla ferruginosa—all made up of carbonate of lime, carbonate of magnesia, and ferruginous (rust-colored) clay,” are the Professor’s own words, and “all” includes two stones from Nazareth.

II.

By confining themselves, in their refutation of my book, to subtleties concerning details, my opponents have kept in the background the value and the amount of matter of higher interest which it contains. In this question of the legend of Loreto, we have before us, as I have said, not a dogma but a historical fact. In studying it there is required not only the application of the principles of logic for determining the truth, but also the specific rules formulated by competent scholars as necessary for its impartial inspection. I have found these rules enunciated in connection with the holy sudarium of Cadouin by a learned man as notable as a good Catholic as he was for his exceptional competence in dealing with what pertains to the Christian Orient—the late Count Riant. “While not adopting certain independent doctrines concerning the history of Apostolic times; while bowing without discussion before the traditions handed down by the first Christians; and while recognizing as authentic relics those which were considered as such without written proofs by the fathers of the Church,—it seems to me that one may not place in the second rank the oral tradition of later periods subsequent to the point where the continuous series of written testimony begins, but may demand that the authenticity of a relic of the first order, solemnly presented for the veneration of the faithful, must be established by an *unbroken chain* of written testimony, collecting directly the heritage of the tradition of Apostolic times in order to transmit it to us without lapses.”¹ To these words

¹ “—it seems to me that, for later periods subsequent to the point where the continuous series of written testimony

of Count Riant, written in 1870, I added: "These considerations apply precisely to the Holy House, inasmuch as, according to the legend, it is identical with the house of Nazareth." (p. 7.) Now, with regard to this matter, where is this "unbroken chain of written testimony"? There are not even odd links. Keeping to the chronological order, which seemed to me the most natural, I believe that I have shown:

First, by the relations of travelers, and pilgrims, that (a) previously to the period assigned for the first translation (A. D. 1291), the house of the Blessed Virgin in Nazareth had been destroyed, or at least (b) that the spot which had witnessed the mystery of the Annunciation continued, as in the past, to be the object of the veneration of visitors;

Secondly, by charters, that there existed a church of St. Mary at Loreto previously to the time of that same translation;

Thirdly, by a rigorous classification of documents and the legitimate elimination of spurious ones concerning the Holy House, that there was no mention, either at Loreto or elsewhere, of this translation previously to the year 1472;

Fourthly, that the popes and the Congregation of Rites have been exceedingly reserved in declaring themselves on the subject of the miracle of the translation. The first bull that affirms it is of the year 1507; the inscription in the Martyrology, of the year 1669; the first "officium proprium," of the year 1699. (p. 7-8)

As must have been noticed, I do not lay much stress on the destruction before 1291 of the house of Nazareth, on the continued existence of which the criticisms of THE CASKET rest, to a great extent; but I maintain that begins, we may assign a subordinate place to oral tradition ("que l'on peut faire passer au second rang . . . la tradition orale"), and require that, etc." This is the translation of the passage as found at p. 7 of Chevalier's book, and I take it to be the true one.

no traveler made mention of its disappearance. And if it be thought that this disappearance is proved by Riboldo, who mentions two altars instead of three, I reply that one need only continue the reading of my résumé (p. 73) to see, two lines further on, that Sanudo (in 1321, 1322) and Breidenbach (in 1483) saw three altars.

The vital point is that during the interval which extends from the assumed period of the translation to the end of the fifteenth century the legend has on its side only spurious documents. I have published three of these (1295, 1297, and about 1330), and I call upon an paleographer or diplomatist worthy of the name to confirm their spurious nature. Since then I have discovered two others, which I have published in the *Mélanges p'archéologie et d'histoire de l'école française de Rome*: one is a bull attributed to Clement V (1310), the other, a relic of Farfa. To these five documents must be added a sixth: the mention of the translation of the house of Nazareth in the *Mappa mundi spiritualis* of Jean Germain. I have shown that the original manuscript of the *Mappa mundi spiritualis*, written in 1459, does not contain the passage, which is a fraudulent addition made—without evil intent—by the Latin translator of the work at a period when the legend was in vogue. (pp. 183 sqq.)

It cannot be denied that there is in this accumulation of falsifications a strong presumption against the authenticity of the Holy House. One falsehood—much less a series of falsehoods—is not invented for the purpose of supporting a recognized fact. To the minds of reflecting opponents the absence of all mention of the translation during one hundred and eighty years could not but be a very embarrassing argument; so they hastened to quiet the pious faithful by assuring them that documents will be found,—have been found in the archives of the Congregation of Indulgences and of the Vatican.

I replied that it would be difficult to see how this Congregation, which dates only from the seventeenth century, should have in its archives contemporaneous records of an event which a fifteenth-century tradition assigned to the thirteenth-century. Nor is there room for the belief that the Vatican possesses bulls more ancient or more explicit than those which I have published. And this because in presenting for confirmation to Pius IV thirty one bulls relating to the pilgrimage, its directors could not have left out those which were of greater importance than the ones which they presented. A friend of mine, who is a canon of Loreto, wrote to me recently: "I believe that the collection of Loreto in the Vatican, which has not yet been explored to the very bottom, may provide us with surprises." If there existed among the Vatican archives a collection of Loreto, it would long ago have been "explored to the very bottom" and even published in its entirety. There certainly do exist at the Vatican documents relating to the Holy House: I have published more of them than my predecessors. The late Father Denifle, O. P., who was assistant to the curator of the Vatican archives, discovered there a set of documents very compromising for the authenticity of the house of Nazareth. He spoke of this find to a number of friends, several of whom have borne witness to the circumstance since his death. But during his life-time the matter was not agitated and no one had the curiosity to ask him for a sight of the documents or even to take down the number. I have instituted a search for this collection, and I undertake, as soon as it shall be in my power to do so, to publish it in its entirety, no matter what may be the consequences for my work.

Another argument, which my opponents refuse to take into account, is the universal silence of contemporaries, both in the East and in the West. For a negative argument it is, under the circumstances, of very great importance. Here it is, as developed by Count Delaborde,

professor at the Ecole des Chartes: "During this long period (from 1291 to 1472) not a voice was raised among the Christians of the East to lament the disparition of this precious dwelling. In the West, too, not a voice was raised to celebrate a miracle which should have astounded not Italy alone, but the whole of Christendom. How is it that Villani,—to cite but one—Villani, who describes in such detail the fall of Saint-Jean d' Acre in 1291, and who gives himself up on this occasion to long dissertations on the disappearance of the Christian power in the Holy Land; Villani, who delights in reporting miracles occurring far from Italy, and, nevertheless, of much less universal interest, such as that of the Rue des Pilettes in Paris; A. D. 1290:—how is it that Villani says not one word of the alleged disparition of the Holy House from Nazareth? How is it that the pope to whom, as the defenders of the legend claim, the magistrate of Recanati gave notice as early as 1295 of the arrival of the Holy House; how is it that all those who, following his lead, called upon Christendom to undertake a new crusade, refrained in their appeals from citing an event so apt to arouse the enthusiasm of the multitudes? How is it, finally, that in the bulls conceded to the Church of Loreto before the sixteenth century, there is not one word which can be construed as relating to the translation or even to the existence of the Holy House?" (*Journal des Savants*, 1907, pp. 368–369.) What I myself have to say concerning this silence of Italian chroniclers, may be seen at pp. 154 and 155 of my book. The silence of St. Antoninus of Florence, it has been sought to explain on the score of his "not thinking himself as yet assured as to the authenticity of this event." Besides the fact that this same hesitation seems to have held back all historians of Loreto up to the year 1632, it is strange that St. Antoninus did not experience the same scruples before inserting in his Chronicle the fable of the female pope Jo-

hanna, the most fearful calumny ever thrown into the face of the Roman Church.

But how, it might be said, could the legend of Loreto with all its developments have been invented without having a foundation—at least rudimentary—in the past? I have shown by three examples how it is possible to embroider on a foundation of nothing a well-developed historical theme: William Tell, St. Philomena, and St. Theodosia (pp. 479–482). If I revert for a moment to the second of these, it is because the question was reopened by Father Pius Bonavenia, S. J., in order to contest the exceedingly scientific and exceedingly authoritative conclusions of Signor Orazio Marucchi (*Controversia sul celeberrimo epitaffio di S. Filomena, v. e. m.*, Roma, 1906). Professor Marucchi in his rejoinder, proved to his ignorant opponent that the disposition of the slabs of the *loculus* discovered in the cemetery of Priscilla and transported to Mugnano, was not due to accident, but to the distinct intention, noticed also in other instances, of the *fossore*s. (*Studio archeologico sulla celebre iscrizione di Filomena scoperta nel cimitero di Priscilla*, Rome, 1907). He showed him that the *fossore*s did not inscribe the name of the deceased before setting the bricks which closed the tomb, but afterwards. He showed moreover, that nothing in the present case denotes a martyrdom, which is actually excluded by the expression, “Pax tecum.” The experience of Father Bonavenia demonstrates once more the necessity of undertaking studies of this sort with complete indifference as to the conclusions to which they may lead.

Concerning the origin of the legend of Loreto I have been very reserved. It is strange that the authorship of explanations given by different writers has been attributed to me, whereas I have simply reproduced them without the least intention of adopting them; and it is also strange that no mention has been made of that explanation which has seemed to me—and to many others—the most probable, because the most natural and

226 THE HOLY HOUSE OF LORETO.

that having the greatest appearance of truth. The documents designate at first by the words "*almae domus*" the dependent edifices of the sanctuary, where pilgrims were received, and even the hospital where the sick and the poor gathered. The use of the word "*domus*" in the singular to designate the sanctuary itself, is of later date. The popular imagination made it the real house of the Blessed Virgin.

What is the origin of the sanctuary itself? It has been insisted that the "*ecclesia Sancte Marie in fundo Laureti*," of 1194, and even that of 1285, is a different sanctuary from that of the pilgrimage. The essential point is to establish that the church devastated by the Ghibellines of the country in 1313-1314 is really that which the legend later qualified as the Holy House. There is no mistake possible here, since it was despoiled of the oblations of the faithful and the image of the Virgin of its adornments. It is the very same which John XXII designates as a rural church, with a chaplain, in 1320; for he alludes to the pillage which it had suffered. In order to determine incontestably that it was the parish church of the locality, it suffices to keep in view the fact that in the Middle Ages country pastors were designated as chaplains. (p. 143.)

But whence came the statue which was later called miraculous? Professor Dante Vaglieri has recently drawn attention to the fact that, at the close of the thirteenth century, Albania was the scene of a struggle between the Angevins and the Servians. These last ended by turning to Constantinople and its Orthodox Church. The consequence was for a number of Catholics of the country that they were forced to expatriate themselves. They crossed the Adriatic and came to settle in the Marches, bringing with them an image of the Virgin. It is possible to fit this relic into the periods fixed by tradition. Until the appearance of the legend of the translation, this statue was the treasure of the church of Loreto, and Paul II, in 1470, still limited himself to

saying that the church contained an image of the Blessed Virgin surrounded by a group of angels, which the mercy of God had placed there. There is up to this time so little question of translation, that the title of the sanctuary was at first, and remained (until 1464 at least), the Nativity of the Blessed Virgin: that was the "gloriosum festum" of the district. It was changed later to that of the Incarnation, in order to conform to the legend which had meanwhile gained the upper hand.

My opponents have done their readers a great injustice by not putting before them the extract which I gave (pp. 464 and 465) from the book of the Assumptionist Fathers on Palestine, the best on its subject from an archaeological standpoint. Here are a few lines from it: "The examination of the excavations conscientiously made by the Franciscans and the descriptions of early pilgrims, would hardly permit one to connect the cave itself with the little structure of Loreto. . . . But we ought frankly to confess that Oriental tradition does not mention the translation and that no ancient text gives us any information concerning the site or even the existence of the Holy House in front of the cave at Nazareth." My opponents should in justice have given more space to the evidence of those who contradict the legend. There were contradictors from the first, and a denial is not a sufficient answer to the contemporaries who speak *de visu*. When later on, minds of the first rank, such as Mabillon and Montfaucon, describe their sojourn and their devotions at Loreto, without pronouncing the word translation, their silence is a formal admission that they held it as doubtful and that it had no historical consistence in their opinion.

I make bold to assert that no faculty of letters, even in a Catholic university, either in Europe or America, would accept a historical thesis the conclusion of which would be favorable to the legend of Loreto. Just let some one try it.

III.

What I have already said renders it unnecessary for me to take up one by one, and to refute in detail, the twenty-three articles published in criticism of my book in the *Antigonish* (N. S.) *CASKET*. Such a procedure would, moreover, exceed the limits assigned to me by the editor of the *Catholic Fortnightly Review*. It has been thought the convincing force of my book would be destroyed by particular criticism of details, but this is, for the most part, mere childish quibbling. My critics have forgotten the saying of Descartes: "It were, it seems to me, doing human judgment a grave injustice to will that it should go farther than the eyes can see." I have indicated above the outlines of my work. My opponents have been careful to conceal them. They will not take into account historical facts: "The present arbitrarily forges the rings in the chain of tradition, so that tradition, no longer remains tradition, but becomes an agreeable echo of the opinion which happens to be in favor for the time being." This has been true of Loreto ever since the fifteenth century. To reply is not to refute. With a hearty desire and impelled by preconceived notions one may find an answer to anything. Did the Molinists leave unanswered a single one of the arguments of the Thomists, and *vice versa*? And yet these polemics, pushed to the extreme, accomplished so little in deciding the question of grace, that Rome imposed silence upon the combatants.

The writer in *THE CASKET* founds the tradition of Loreto:

First, on the omnipotence of God. I have answered

this in advance at the very outset of my work: "The account which I give does not controvert any doctrinal point; it is not, therefore, necessary, in order to estimate its value, to have recourse to the lights of theology and to test its conformity with the dogmas of the faith. The power of God is without limit, but it remains to be proved that He has exerted it in this instance." (pp. 5 and 6.)

Secondly, on the consensus of opinion of a civilized people and of the local religious authorities. From this can be drawn no other historical proof than the legend itself, which is to beg the question. The masses are, in the matter of superstition, susceptible to every manner of illusions, and the faithful often draw their leaders after them.

Thirdly, on miracles. Miracles worked in sanctuaries of the Blessed Virgin Mary prove her goodness and her power; nothing more. Here is a resumé of the most striking miracle obtained at Loreto. It deserves to be cited, if for no other reason, because of its originality. On July 16, 1489, there arrived at Loreto a nobleman from Grenoble, Pierre Orgentorix (or Argentorix), in company with his wife Antonia, who was possessed with seven devils. After having striven in vain, by every means, in his own country, to deliver his wife from these importunate guests, he decided to take her to Italy. She was exorcised in vain at St. Jules' in Milan, St. Geminiano's at Modena, and at St. Peter's in Rome. In despair Pierre was about to return to France, when a knight of Rhodes counselled him to try Loreto. Ten men led Antonia, in spite of her resistance, into the church. As soon as the penitentiary, Stefano di Giovanni Francigena, had begun to read the exorcism, the demons set to shouting and declining [declaring?] their names. The first called himself Sourd. He fled, extinguishing the candle. The second, Heroth, boasted of having perpetrated the death of the Duke of Burgund (1419), and went forth crying: "It is not you, but

Mary who expels us." The next day, the third devil, Horrible, gloated over having incited Herodias to demand the head of John the Baptist. The fourth, Arctus, had instigated Herod to slaughter the Innocents. Interrogated as to the nature of the place where they were, he affirmed that it was Mary's room. He even pointed out on the left the spot where the Virgin was at the moment of the Annunciation, and on the right the place where stood the angel." Angelita, who is responsible for publishing this strange account, also reveals the names of the three other demons: Ventilot, Bricher, and Serpent. Riera adds that the vicar-general of the Carmelites asked the fourth devil, whether the members of his order had been charged with the care of the house of Nazareth. The demon replied that they had, adding that this same honor was due to them at Loreto. For having invoked the spirit of untruth the Carmelite deserved to be deceived. The authentic annals of his order deny that his brothers ever had a monastery at Nazareth.

Fourthly, on the assent of the popes. I have demonstrated repeatedly and to the point of satiety, that previously to 1507 not a pope affirmed the translation, and that Julius II, in his bull of that year, spoke of the Holy House as coming from Bethlehem, which is not a mistake of the copyist (I have persuaded Mr. Bishop to agree to this), as has been vigorously maintained. If it were a mere copyist's error, it is high time to correct it in the registers of the Vatican, where the bull exists in the original. Preceding popes had granted indulgences to the church (after 1387) and mentioned a miraculous image, but not one word concerning the transportation by the angels of the Holy House, and all the sophisms advanced to justify this silence do but render it the more eloquent.

THE CASKET reproaches me bitterly (somehow all my opponents are bitter; it is clear that we have not the same conception of Christian charity) with having com-

mitted a slip of the same sort as that of Julius II, by saying that the Mantuan relegates the disparition of the Holy House to the period of the Emperor Heraclius. I reproduced on page 243 of my book his text in its entirety, but I only gave an extract at page 142, where I am accused of omitting the phrase "tunc etiam. . . ." Was it indeed necessary? Let us recall the dates. Heraclius was Emperor of the East from 610 to 641. Mahomet died in 632. By writing; "Sub Heraclio Romanorum imperatore. . . . Tunc etiam Mahometi invalesciente perfidia. . . . Tum quoque fuit ipsum Cubiculum. . . .," does not the Mantuan give us to understand that he attaches these three events to the same epoch?

As for Recanati having been burnt in 1322, it does not follow from that fact that documents concerning Loreto were destroyed there. It would be necessary to produce texts at least mentioning the existence of such documents; but no such texts are forthcoming.

THE CASKET has judged it opportune to bring up a denial by Msgr. Verde published in the *Ami du Clergé*. No one misunderstood that. It is what one may call a diplomatic *dementi*. The Monsignor's interlocutor had noticed his declaration against Loreto at the close of the interview. Besides he is too intelligent to mistake the sense of the words pronounced, and he had no interest at all in deceiving me. It is less difficult to perceive the interested motives—for the future—which inspired his protestation.

I will give myself the pleasure of citing in conclusion the words of Father de Santi, S. J., in his fine *Etude historique et critique* on the Litany of Loreto; they are just as applicable to the Holy House;

"The opinion," he says, "which attributes great antiquity to the Litany of Loreto is, then, a legend built upon an event comparatively very recent. What is more curious is that this legend took its beginning, or at least

was spread abroad, during the nineteenth century. In this connection let us note the habitual attitude of those who defend legends: We have an opportunity here to study it from life. The more obscure an event is, the more profound is the silence of history with regard to the same, and the more these good people appeal with assurance to the ancient traditions which have transmitted it to us, to the numerous writers who mention it, to the practices and customs widespread among the faithful which sanction its authenticity, and so forth." (p. 238.)

And, lastly, I will mention a personal matter for the purpose of bringing out more effectively the incomparable advantages of an *a priori* indifference in the scrutiny of historical questions, and also to show with what conscientious fairness I have studied and treated that of Loreto. In 1902 the cause of Joan of Arc struck a snag in the S. Congregation of Rites in an abjuration which the Maid was said to have signed before she was burnt. The consultors declared that they could not proceed with the process as long as this testimony of the weakness of Joan *in extremis* was held to be authentic. Canon Dunand, author of a *Histoire complète de Jeanne d' Arc* asked me to lay the question before the tribunal of the Congress of Learned Societies at the Sorbonne. After first disabusing myself of any prepossession whatever on the subject, I got together and compared all the texts bearing on that special fact. I reached the end of my inquiry without permitting myself to be influenced either by the desire of glorifying Joan of Arc, or the fear of injuring the cause of her beatification. Although inserted in the authentic report of Bishop Cauchon, the document containing the abjuration turned out to be spurious, and I did not hesitate to declare it so. Not one at the Sorbonne or elsewhere raised his voice against my documented conclusion. As my readers are aware, the cause was continued at Rome and ended in the glorification of "La Pucelle." Why do those who approve me for

demolishing that spurious document, take it ill that I declare to be false certain papers concerning the Holy House? I believe that I am serving the Church in the last case as well as I served her in the first.

P. S.—I am happy to bear witness to my perfect accord with the latest Encyclical of Pope Pius X, “*Pascendi*.” In it His Holiness recommends that questions concerning pious local traditions and relics be not mooted in journals or reviews which are not published with the object of fostering piety, nor in a tone of persiflage or one tinged with disdain. He in no wise forbids treating of these questions in serious, documented works. It was for taking the initiative in this very thing—“exposing the question of Loreto to the passions of daily journalism,”—that I reproached the *Vérité Française* (issues of December 3 and 4, 1906).

ULYSSE CHEVALIER.

Romans, France.

REJOINDER TO CANON CHEVALIER.

I.

The learned Canon of Romans presents his credentials by way of attesting his competency. I have no quarrel with him on this score. But I demur to his assumption that no person is fitted to enter the lists against him unless he has gained admission into some select circle of savants who follow an opposite plan to that of Gratiano's

men whose visages
Do cream and mantle, like a standing pond,
And do a wilful stillness entertain,

Yet with like intent make avowal

Of wisdom, gravity, profound conceit;
As who should say, "I am Sir Oracle,
And when I ope my lips let no dog bark!"

We, on this side of the water, recognize no exclusive privilege of caste or school, and ask for no credentials other than proved ability to grapple with an opponent. The champion of any cause is to be judged by the account that he gives of himself in the arena. I have challenged the Canon's conclusions, not himself—not his competency, not his learning, not his application and painstaking research. All that

he says or cites to justify his claim on this head is, so far as I am concerned, beside the mark.

“Why this avalanche of refutation?” asks the Canon, who being deeply involved in it, naturally exaggerates the weight that is upon him. Not for the reason that he gives, “that a place of devotion is being considered more or less as if it were a dogmatic truth.” The reason is that the Holy House of Loreto is “still held in great veneration,” as it was in 1386 when Pope Urban VI. wrote the words. “To us,” that I may quote Father Faber, “Nazareth and its Holy House, exiled, wandering, angel-borne, Syrian, Dalmatian, Italian, all by turns, are consecrated places, doubly consecrated by their old memories, and also by their strange continued life of local graces, and the efficacious balm of a Divine Presence, awful and undecayed.” (1) “O lovely Spouse of the Eternal King,” cried St. Francis of Sales on coming thither as a pilgrim, “it is then here that are thy beams of cedar and thy planks of cypress! And it is behind these walls that thou didst stand, O Divine Love, looking through the windows, looking through the lattices. Here thou didst feed among the lilies till the day declined and the shadows fell. In this place, O Lord, thou didst become my Brother!” I

¹ Bethlehem, ch, 2, p. 66.

know not whether the "scientific" Catholics of our own time are capable of feeling such devotion as this in the presence of stone walls and beams of cedar. But they should remember that the sentiment lives on in the hearts of others though it may have withered in their own.

What the Canon calls a "theological prepossession" is properly described as a devotion to or a veneration for a sanctuary which is believed to be the earthly home of Our Lord and His Blessed Mother. On what does this belief rest? Not, of course, on the infallible authority of the Church, nor yet merely on the fact that the Office of the Translation has been inserted in the Breviary, though the latter is what Chevalier gives the reader to understand. The belief existed centuries before the concession of the office. It rests, as we learn from that part of the lesson of the second nocturn cited by our author himself at page 410, (1) on the reiterated declarations of Roman Pontiffs in official documents, (2) on the consent of the whole Catholic world for hundreds of years, (3) on the testimony of the numberless miracles wrought in the Holy House and the heavenly favours granted there. It is idle, and argues a lack of discernment on Chevalier's part, to cite in this connection the two responses of the Sacred

Congregation of Rites. They refer to an entirely different matter—the value that the grant of a liturgical office has as evidence of an apparition or revelation. For, apart from the fact that here there is question neither of apparition nor of revelation, the Sacred Congregation itself states explicitly the grounds of our belief in the miraculous translation, as set down above, and declares that the belief is warranted (*comprobatur*) on these grounds. This is quite a different thing from merely permitting or not forbidding belief in an apparition or revelation, as in the second nocturn lessons of the offices of the Rosary and the Scapular. These the responses cited by Chevalier would fit exactly.

Our learned friend describes the “legend of the miraculous translation” as propped up on a “scaffolding of hypotheses” which will not bear the impact of one well-directed argument. This “scaffolding” is a thing of the imagination. The miraculous translation rests upon tradition, the tradition of two peoples, and the tradition stands until it is overthrown. It is in possession, and can not be ousted by any number of hypothetical conclusive arguments. Supposing it to be true that there are in the neighbourhood of Loreto quarries that yield the same kind of stone as that of which the Holy

House is built, it still remains to be shown that these quarries were known in the olden time, and that the House is really made of stone that was taken thence. We have it on the authority of Mgr. Faloci Pulignani, in his *La Santa Casa di Loreto secondo un Affresco di Gubbio*, that "all the houses, all the churches all the towers, all the walls of Recanati and of Loreto, *in every epoch*, down to this day, have been built of brick exclusively, without any admixture of stone" (p. 102), which goes to show that the quarries at Monte Conero are not easily accessible from Loreto, or at any rate that the stone found there was not available for building purposes. Furthermore, Professor Ratti's examen and analysis proved the stone of the Holy House to be identical, in chemical composition and in physical qualities, with stone brought by Mgr. Bartolini from Nazareth. Even if the same kind of stone be found in the environs of Loreto, the miraculous translation, regarded simply as an hypothesis, will still have thus much in its favour, that the Holy House stands at Loreto without foundations, and that in front of the cave at Nazareth there were discovered foundations which were ascertained by actual measurement to be of exactly the same dimensions. It is also to be observed that microscopic examination of stone affords a better

test of identity than chemical analysis. It reveals the physical characteristics, which may be different even where the chemical constituents are the same. Professor Ratti employed both tests. He also analyzed mortar taken from the Holy House and mortar taken from the sacred cave at Nazareth, and found both to be composed of the same materials, namely, lime or chalk worked up with bits of vegetable charcoal. "Has anyone in Italy," says Bartolini, "ever made use of mortar made of chalk and cinders or charcoal, when the soil abounds in volcanic substances that make the best mortar in the world?"¹ It is obvious to remark that "the materials from which the Santa Casa is constructed" are stone and mortar, and that the mortar does not "come from quarries in the neighbourhood of Loreto."

Since the foregoing was written, I have gone in person to Loreto and Nazareth. I need here but refer the reader to the paper published in the third volume of this series (pp. 211-221), and to cite the conclusion: "I have touched and I have seen the stone of Nazareth, and I testify that it is identical with the stone of the Holy House; I have touched and I have seen stone taken from the quarries at Monte Conero, and I testify that it is not identical with the stone of the Holy House."

¹ "Sopra la Santa Casa di Loreto," p. 87.

We are told that in 1905 Dr. Schafer examined the walls of the Holy House, on behalf of Dr. Huffer, and decided absolutely against the legend. On what grounds? One of the three who were associated with Dr. Schafer on that occasion writes in the *Annali della Santa Casa di Loreto* for December, 1906, that the only results of that examination were to show, (1) "that the internal walls of the Santa Casa to the height of about ten feet are of dark-red stone, (2) that above this point there are bricks, (3) that in the mortar found under one of the bricks could be seen, when crushed, bits of charcoal." He adds: "If Dr. Schafer is a serious and sober-minded critic, he must agree with me that nothing else resulted from the examination but what I have set forth above, and that the question regarding the Holy House remains just where it was, no new light having been thrown upon it by our inquiry."

How is it that the Canon makes so much now of the petrographic aspect of the question? It cuts no figure at all in his book, which was meant to be, he declares, an *historical* study, not an *archeological* inquiry.¹ Can it be that he is contemplating a withdrawal from the advanced positions taken up, and a change of base?

¹ p. 478, footnote.

II.

As against the received tradition which affirms the miraculous translation of the Holy House, Canon Chevalier undertook to prove in his *Notre Dame de Lorette* (1) that there was nothing left at Nazareth by 1291 but the grotto that is still to be seen there, and (2) that the sanctuary of Loreto is no other than the ancient parish church of St. Mary *in fundo Laureti*, which figures in a document as early as 1194, just one hundred years before the date that tradition assigns to the arrival of the Holy House in Italy. To have proved either of these points would, as is plain, have been to strike a death-blow at the tradition. But he has proved neither. I, on the contrary, have shown conclusively from the testimonies cited by himself (1) that the House stood in front of the grotto at Nazareth during the 12th century, (2) that the grotto alone remained at the close of the 13th, and (3) that St. Mary *in fundo Laureti* cannot at all be identified with St. Mary of Loreto, the sanctuary of the pilgrimage, which is known to us as the Holy House.

In his reply the Canon still says that he believes he has proved these two points. But his statement of them is so modified as to involve a real change of front. As regards the first point, he says now that the Virgin's house at Nazareth had been destroyed before 1291, "or at least (b) that the spot which had witnessed the mystery of the Annunciation continued, as in the past, to be the object of the veneration of visitors." In the book the phrase introduced by "as" runs, "in the past and in the same conditions" (p. 8.) The omission is of vital consequence. No one questions that the place at Nazareth continued to be the resort of pilgrims after 1291. But that it remained just as it was before 1291, as implied by the words "and in the same conditions," is untrue, as I have shown, for the house was there before that date and after that date was there no longer.

The Canon tells us now that he does not, in his book, "lay much stress on the destruction before 1291 of the house of Nazareth." On the contrary, this is the foundation of his thesis, and the first fifty pages of his work are devoted to an attempt at establishing it. He cites testimony after testimony in support of it, and in his summing up (pp. 49-54) declares he has proved it up to the hilt. Lays not much stress

on it, forsooth! It was well worth laying stress upon, from his point of view, for to have proved it would have been to "knock the bottom clean out of the old tradition," as was said in the opening paper.

"I maintain," declares the Canon, "that no traveller made mention of its disappearance." Every traveller, after 1291, attests the fact, and it is the fact that matters. On this point we have the explicit testimony of Nicholas Poggibonsi in 1345. "If it be thought," continues our learned friend, "that this disappearance is proved by Ricoldo, who mentions two altars instead of three, I reply that one need only continue the reading of my résumé (p. 73) to see, two lines further on, that Sanudo in (1321-1322) and Breidenbach (in 1483) saw three altars." What he says about the altars betrays a lack of close and critical reading of his own texts as well as of my comments. The point has already been dealt with. To repeat is tedious, but seems necessary. "Mixed up with excerpts from the itineraries of these pilgrims, in Chevalier's book, are to be found citations from writers who got their information at second hand. This, at times, gives rise to confusion. Thus Sanutus Torsellus (Sanudo,) in a work written about 1321, tells us that 'In Nazareth the place is shown where the

Angel Gabriel' saluted Our Lady, and then goes on to state that 'in the chapel there built *were* three altars, and the chapel *was* hewn out of the rock in stone, etc.,' all of which is simply copied, with a change of tense, from the work of Burchard of Mount Sion already cited. The same passage is copied again by Bernard of Briendenback, in 1483, and by Nicholas Le Huen, in 1487, but without change of tense, thus: 'There *are* three altars in the chapel, etc.'" Here are Burchard's words written in 1283, as cited by Chevalier himself at page 48; "*Tria altaria sunt in capella, et est excisa de rupe in petra, etc.,*" which are identical with Sanudo's saving the difference of tense. It was in 1283, then, that the three altars were seen; by 1345 there was but one.

Here we will pause to dwell upon the significance of this disappearance. The house was in Nazareth before 1291; it was not there after that date. What became of it? Only one of two alternatives is possible. Either it was destroyed on the spot, or it was removed. If destroyed, then by the Saracens, certainly not by the Christians. But not even by the Saracens, for, (1) they had not destroyed it in the time going before; (2) they could not destroy it if they would; and (3) they would not, even if they could.

1. We learn from the Saxon monk, Willibald, who visited Nazareth in the eighth century, that the Church of the Annunciation, underneath which were the house and grotto, would have been destroyed before that time by the Saracens had not the Christians redeemed it more than once, by the payment of money.¹ It was destroyed some three centuries after, when the Saracens pillaged and sacked the ancient town.² But the house, which was in the crypt of the Church, was not touched, for Daniel, who tells us that the Franks restored the Church, visited the grotto and house which he found under the north transept.³ The fact, then, that the house was still intact, after several centuries of Saracen sway in Nazareth, goes a long way toward justifying the assumption of its continued immunity in the subsequent time.

2. I have said that the Saracens could not destroy the house, even if they would. This statement may seem bold, even to the verge of rashness. But let us consider the matter. From a very early time the house and grotto were transformed into a chapel. This chapel became the crypt of the ancient church, and access was had to it from the north transept of the church above by two little doors and stairways, as described by Daniel. The interior

¹ "Notre Dame de Lorette," p. 30. ² *Ib.* 32. ³ *Ib.*

of this underground chapel including both house and grotto, was ornamented with mosaic and fresco work as we learn from the relations of the pilgrims,¹ and over it all was the stone or marble pavement of the church. If one did not know beforehand that that part of the underground chapel, which formerly had been the house, was enclosed by four walls of masonry, one would easily have taken it for a continuation of the grotto, into which both stairways led from the church above. In fact some of the pilgrims themselves seem to have done so. Burchard, as we have seen, speaks of the chapel as "hewn out of the rock in stone," and even Daniel, who is, after John Phocas, our most explicit witness to the existence of the house, which he nevertheless calls a "cell," speaks of the whole underground place as a grotto. How much more would the Saracens, who were strangers to the faith and tradition of the pilgrims, have been likely to take the whole underground place for a grotto, from the very fact that it was underground and in part hewn out of the rock. Now knowledge is power, at least in this sense that it is essential to the exercise of power, *Ignoti nulla cupido*—one does not wish to have, much less to destroy, what one knows not of. A bird's nest, carefully hid under a hedge, will be safe from

¹Ib. pp. 60, 61, 63.

that most dangerous of animals, the small boy, so long as he doesn't know it to be there, or doesn't take it to be what it is. It is in this sense I say that the Saracens could not destroy the house, even if they wished to, because to all appearances and for all practical purposes it was part of the grotto. Besides, it is the prominent and stately object that provokes to acts of vandalism; things hidden and lowly escape.

3. But the Saracens would not destroy the house, even if they knew it to be there. Why? In the first place, because it was their interest to preserve it. Pilgrims from every land came to visit the place, and the Saracens took toll of them. One of the first pilgrims to visit Nazareth after 1291, William of Boldensel, tells us that "in the ruined church there is a little place covered over, and it is carefully guarded by the Saracens."¹ Other pilgrims tell us how they had to pay those guardians for the privilege of entering. Nor were the followers of Mohammed influenced by merely mercenary motives. If the Koran taught them to make war upon all who would not acknowledge their prophet, it also taught them to venerate Christ and His Virgin Mother. Suriano, who visited Nazareth in the latter half of the 15th century, assures us that "the

¹ *Ib.* p. 59.

holy chapel " i. e., the grotto of the Annunciation, had been, down to that time, "held in great veneration by all Christians and Moham-medans—in sino al presente é tenuta cum grande veneratione da tuti Christiani e Machometani." ¹ A motive of religion, then, not less than greed of gain, would have led the children of Islam to spare the hallowed earthly home of One whom they, too, regarded as a great prophet.

All this creates a strong presumption, amounting to moral certainty, that the house was not destroyed. But we know from the testimony of every pilgrim who visited the place after 1291 that the house was no longer there, for they found but the grotto only. We must conclude then, that it was removed thence—certainly not by human agency. On the other hand, we have unquestioned documentary evidence that shortly after 1291, or to be precise, in 1313, there existed at Loreto a sanctuary, which is now known as the Santa Casa, which then for the first time comes into view there as a noted place of pilgrimage, which answers to the description of the house that was at Nazareth, which has the same dimensions as proved by actual measurement, which still stands without foundations, which con-

¹Ib. p. 70.

stant tradition confirmed by numberless miracles affirms to have been brought thither by angels. Let our learned friend account for the disappearance of the house from Nazareth, and then for the appearance at Loreto of the Santa Casa, which synchronizes so aptly with the other event and fits in so well with it. These two interesting and suggestive facts—the disappearance and the contemporary appearance—are proved by first-hand documents cited in his own book. I leave them to speak for themselves.

Not less significant is the Canon's change of front regarding the church of St. Mary *in fundo Laureti*. In his book he does not hesitate to identify this ancient parish church with the sanctuary of the pilgrimage.¹ Now he simply says that he has shown, "by charters, that there existed a church of St. Mary at Loreto previously to the time of that first translation [1291]," and maintains the "essential point is to establish that the church devastated by the Ghibellines of the country in 1313-1314 is really that which the legend later qualified as the Holy House." What he says in the first place is quite true, but nothing to the purpose. What he maintains in the second place is so plainly untenable that I am amazed at it. We are far

more interested than he can be to establish this fact, and are quite agreed that there "is no mistake possible here." The essential point for him is to establish that "the church of St. Mary of Loreto," which is described in the document of 1315, not as being "*in fundo Laureti*," but "in the district and diocese of Recanati," and which was plundered by the Ghibellines, is identical with the parish church described in the document of 1194 as "St. Mary *in fundo Laureti*," and in that of 1285 as St. Mary of Loreto, *in fundo Loreti*, the adjunct "*in fundo Laureti*" being distinctive of it in both cases. To have proved this would be almost as fatal to the tradition as to have proved that the house was destroyed at Nazareth before 1291. I say "almost as fatal," for, though the tradition has it that the first translation took place in that year, it would still be possible to fall back on Leopardi's theory of an earlier translation, whereas it would have been manifestly impossible to translate what no longer existed. On the other hand, the acknowledged identity of the present *Santa Casa* with the sanctuary of the pilgrimage which was plundered by the Ghibellines in 1313 is one of the strong points of our defence of the tradition. Assuming that the house was borne away from Nazareth to Tersatto in 1291, and from Tersatto to Loreto

in 1294, we naturally look for some evidence of its existence at the latter place shortly after that time. And the document of 1315 meets our expectation on this score in the most satisfactory way.

The Canon further declares that the sanctuary mentioned in the document of 1313 "is the very same which John XXII designates as a rural church, with a chaplain, in 1320; for he alludes to the pillage which it had suffered." Even if this were granted, it would not in the least affect our argument. The tradition assumes the existence of it there at that time, and before that time. But that which he affirms here is untenable. In the first place, Pope John does not designate it "as a rural church with a chaplain." The words of the Pope's letter are, "Seu quod, . . . et medietatis ruralis ecclesie Sancte Marie de Laureto, . . . rector existis." One can be administrator (*rector*) of one half (*medietatis*) the property or revenues of a church, but chaplain—surely not. Moreover, in three consecutive issues of *The Casket* (Jan. 31, Feb. 7, Feb. 14,) all of which Canon Chevalier had before him when he wrote (for he sent for them, and he received them,) I pointed out that the Pope uses a future infinitive (*spoliatum fore*) in alluding to a "spoliation" then (in 1320) threatened,

plainly not to "the pillage" perpetrated seven years before (i. e., in 1313). Why the Canon has ignored this is for him to say. To add further disproof is like "killing dead things," but as this thing has been galvanized into life again, I shall kill it dead. In the document referred to—not "four bulls," as the author says at page 485, but four letters of the same tenor sent to different persons—the Pope confers upon a certain Botius a canonry in the cathedral church of Rimini, together with a prebend "if any is now vacant, or as soon as it is vacant," and then goes on, in the usual form, notwithstanding all things whatsoever to the contrary," notwithstanding, in particular, that already "you are prebendary of the churches of St. James and St. Lazarus of Recanati and St. Mary of Varano, and administrator of one half [the property or revenues] of the rural church of St. Mary of Loreto, of which [offices or privileges] you say you are about to be [or in danger of being] unjustly deprived by certain tyrants of those parts, rebels against the Roman Church." This is a literal translation of the passage. It is quite plain that there is question of a spoliation with which Botius was then threatened, the threat being that he should be deprived of his prebendaryships and administration (for these are the antecedent of

“ which—*quibus* ”), in the event of his getting the canonry immediately from the Pope. The “ tyrants of those parts ” were, in all likelihood, the lay patrons of ecclesiastical benefices, for the *juspatronatus* extended to laymen. Here are three different reasons, any one of them by itself conclusive, why it can not be maintained that the Pope alludes to the pillage of the sanctuary of the pilgrimage in this document: (1) there is question of a spoliation in the future, not of a pillage in the past; (2) the objects of this spoliation are ecclesiastical benefices and privileges, not votive offerings, garlands, money, etc., as in the document of 1315; (3) the direct subject of the pillage is the sanctuary, not Botius, and the indirect, not Botius, but the Bishop of Recanati.

That this “ rural church of St. Mary of Loreto ” is the same as the church of St. Mary *in fundo Laureti*, mentioned in the documents of 1193 and 1285, seems beyond question. An indication of its identity is to be found in the epithet “ rural,” which fitly applies to the church *in fundo Laureti*, a country parish church, having an endowment proper to a country church in “ meadows, pastures, mills, etc.,” (document of 1193), while the sanctuary of the pilgrimage was situated on an arid hill, surrounded, as late as the 15th century, by public

forests.¹ To this indication there is added plain proof from the documents of 1315 and 1320. In the latter, Botius is said to be administrator of half the property of the rural church, while in the former, the Lord Bishop of Recanati is expressly named as the proprietor of all the revenues of the sanctuary of the pilgrimage, which consisted of the offerings of pilgrims. To quote from Mr. Edmund Bishop's review of Chevalier's work (*The Tablet*, Nov. 10, 1906, p. 723): "From the sentence of 1315, quoted above, it appears that the offerings made at Loreto went to the bishop of the diocese. Until 1450 (pp. 189-190) the Bishop of Recanati had a right to impound, carry away and apply to such uses, personal or other, as he saw fit, all offerings made in the Church of Loreto [i. e., the sanctuary of the pilgrimage], whether money, gold, silver, jewels, vestments, or sacred vessels." Evidently Botius had no right to administer any part of the revenues of "St. Mary of Loreto, situated in the district and diocese of Recanati, appertaining immediately to the Church of Recanati and the Lord Bishop's sustentation—*Domini Episcopi mensam*" (document of 1315). It follows that the rural church wherein he had such right was other than the sanctuary of the pilgrimage, and no other than

¹ Vogel, tom 1, p. 195.

the old parish church of St. Mary *in fundo Laureti*.

Further than this, we have documentary evidence that the sanctuary of the pilgrimage did not exist in the district and diocese of Recanati in 1285, or even as late as 1292. There is extant a complete list or inventory of the belongings (*res et possessiones*) of that bishopric, first issued March 10, 1285, at a time when the see was suppressed, and again May 10, 1292, a little more than two years after the see was restored.¹ It includes, among many other things, a piece of land "*in fundo Laureti*, beside the Church of St. Mary of Loreto and the road," but has no word of *our* St. Mary of Loreto, on the hill, the sanctuary of the pilgrimage. Now the document of 1315 attests that this sanctuary was a *res et possessio*, one of the belongings, of the Bishop of Recanati in 1313, and a fruitful source of income, as we have seen.

This last-named document is, in truth, the charter of the Holy House. It establishes incontestably its standing as a famous place of pilgrimage for nigh six hundred years. It proves conclusively that it existed at Loreto in 1313, and we know from other sources that it did not at all exist there in 1292. It supplies

¹ "Notre Dame de Lorette," p. 143; D. R. Della Casa, "Studio Storico," p. 188.

the last link in the chain of marvels that unites Loreto with Tersatto and Nazareth as by a heavenly and invisible bond. How explain the appearance of this cottage-shrine at this time, on the wood-crowned heights of Loreto, and its sudden celebrity as a place of pilgrimage? Would any one in his senses think of setting up on a public highway a building without foundations in this remote and lonely woodland region?

Once more I beg to set before the learned Canon of Romans these two problems for solution—the disappearance of the cottage from Nazareth, where its foundations remain, and the appearance of this cottage-shrine without foundations on the hill of Loreto about the same time. I have solved both, or rather they solve each other by simple juxtaposition, the one offering of the other, by their very coincidence, a solution as striking as it is satisfactory.

III.

Our learned friend wants us to agree to certain rules of criticism, arbitrarily laid down. He would have us abandon the ground of tradition, set aside the mute witness of monument and fresco, discard the method of reasonable inference, and let the case be decided solely on the basis of "an *unbroken chain* of written testimony." The Holy House is professedly a relic from the apostolic age. If this relic had never before been authenticated, and there were question of authenticating it now, there might be some reason for subjecting it to the rigorous test proposed by Count Riant. But it was authenticated centuries ago, and for centuries the Catholic world has accepted it as authentic. Its authenticity, therefore, is in possession, and the burden of proof, or rather of disproof, rests with those who deny it. They are the challengers in this case, we the challenged. By "tournament rules" the challenged have the choice of place and weapons. We elect to stand on tradition, and give our opponents fair warning that we shall not abandon that ground until we

are driven thence, and that in vain they will seek to dislodge us by so ineffective a weapon as merely negative argument. Besides, we have shown by written testimony that the house was in Nazareth before 1291, by written testimony that it disappeared from there about that time, by written testimony that the cottage-shrine without foundations, known as the Holy House, made its appearance in Loreto before 1313, and by that year was a noted centre of pilgrimage and devotion. We have thus laid a foundation of facts for the tradition to rest on. As for the tradition itself, it is not concerned with something intangible, such as a vision or revelation, nor bound up with some far-off event or series of events in the fabled past, nor hung up in the air, so to say, but entwined, like the clinging ivy, about a monument of stone that has been celebrated for nearly six centuries as the goal of pilgrimages and the scene of supernatural manifestations.

Of the documents bearing date 1295, 1297, and about 1330, I said in *The Casket* of March 14, "They have simply no value at all as evidence," and I will add, either one way or the other. In his eagerness to press them into service against the tradition, the learned Canon overreaches himself. "One falsehood," he says,—"much less a series of falsehoods—is not in-

vented for the purpose of supporting a recognized fact." In his book he tells us that the first-mentioned documents were forged about the middle of the 17th century (p. 224,) and that the third does not antedate 1575, or thereabout. Now Raphael Riera says that the account given in this third document "was taught in the schools, and that old copies of it were to be found at Recanati in his day;"¹ and Chevalier himself notes that Riera's history was published in 1575, and, according to Leopardi, was written in 1565.² The Canon is therefore wrong in assigning the document to so late a date, and the plain fact is that he doesn't know when it was drawn up. But this by the way. What I wish to direct attention to here is that the miraculous translation was "a recognized fact" long before the supposed spurious documents are said to have been fabricated. More than a century before the earliest date, 1575, Teremanus published his account (1472,) and it is simple matter of record that from that time onward everybody recognized as a fact the miraculous translation. That it was so recognized long before that time we gather from the statement of Suriano's sister (1485) that "everyone believes [the House

¹"Loreto : the New Nazareth," p. 239.

²"Notre Dame de Lorette," p. 353.

of Nazareth] was miraculously carried away from that country, and coming over the sea came to Ancona, and *down to this day (sino al presente)* is called St. Mary of Loreto.”¹ Evidently, then, not one but all three of these reputed falsehoods were “invented for the purpose of supporting a recognized fact.” It was because the fact was recognized on every hand that it was possible to pass off these forgeries, if such they are.

But there is “the universal silence of contemporaries, both in the East and in the West.” Decked out in the ornate style of Count Delaborde, this argument is impressive. Stripped of its rhetoric and reduced to its proper proportions, it amounts to very little. How is it, he asks, that no voice was raised among the Christians of the East to bewail the disappearance of their sanctuary? How is it that Villani, who has so much to say about the disappearance of the Christian power in Palestine, has never a word about the disappearance of the Holy House? I beg to remind those who put these questions that they are just as much bound to find an answer for them as we are. The *fact* of the disappearance is attested

¹I follow Mr. Bishop’s translation (“The Tablet, Nov. 10, 1906”) in all except the words italicized. For these he has “now”—a mistranslation which keeps out of sight of his readers this exceedingly important testimony to the antiquity of the tradition.

by one after another of the pilgrims who visited Nazareth after 1291. Granted that no echo of lamentation over the fact has reached us, the fact remains. If Count Delaborde had paused to reflect how the native Christians all but disappeared from the Holy Land, and especially from Nazareth, when their power disappeared; how they were massacred in tens of thousands by the victorious Turks, as Villani himself relates, and the broken remnants scattered like chaff before the wind, he would perhaps have realized why their wailings died without an echo on the hillsides and in the caves of their ravaged land. The first Christian pilgrims to visit Nazareth after 1291 found the holy place in the custody of the Saracens. As far as I am able to gather, there were no Christian historians or annalists in the Holy Land for centuries after the overthrow of the Christian power, and in the West, during the period between 1291 and 1400, I find but two mentioned by Zitelli in his *Enchiridion*, Villani (1330) and Ptolomaeus Lucensis (1340.) If these do not mention the translation, neither do they mention the existence of the sanctuary itself at Loreto, and yet we know it was much frequented by pilgrims as early as 1313. In 1295, the magistrates of Recanati could apprise the Pope of the arrival of the Holy House, but they

knew not as yet what building it was and whence it came. As for the papal silence during the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries, I have pointed out that this may be accounted for partly by the prolonged absence of the Popes at Avignon and the subsequent Schism of the West; partly by the fact that, as far as is known to-day, the miraculous translation rested, until the researches instituted by Angelita in the sixteenth century, on local traditions only; and partly also by the prudent reticence so characteristic of the Holy See.

I have said that Canon Chevalier has to account for the tradition of two peoples concerning the miraculous translation, and that he has failed to do so. The three instances, now cited by him once more, have been shown to lack the essential elements of a true analogy. "The documents designate at first," he tells us now, "by the words '*almae domus*' the dependent edifices of the sanctuary, where pilgrims were received, and even the hospital where the sick and the poor gathered. The use of the word '*domus*' in the singular to designate the sanctuary itself is of later date." Neither of these statements is true. The word "*domus*" in the singular is used to designate St. Mary of Loreto in a document as early as 1348, and again in 1438. In the former, the

sanctuary is spoken of as "*sacra domus*," in the latter as "*domus sacratissima*"—where "*domus*" can not be taken to mean "church," as the Canon tries to make out in his book, (1) because the Latin "*domus*" is not the equivalent of the Italian "*duomo*," which in Italy designates the cathedral church, and (2) because the adjective "*sacra*," "*sacratissima*" is properly understood of a shrine or sanctuary. On the other hand, the words "*almae domus*" in the plural are not applied to the dependent edifices of the sanctuary until 1447, though the Canon affirms in his book (p. 491) and now repeats that they are so used in 1428; and in the document of 1459, the word "*almae*" with "*domus*" in the plural is employed in a secondary or derivative sense, for the sanctuary is previously spoken of in the same document as "*alma domus*." ¹

And so what the Canon calls the most natural explanation of the origin of the tradition has not even the semblance of a foundation. By the middle of the fifteenth century, when the popular imagination is supposed to have begun to weave its web of legend, the shrine had a continuous history of nigh a century and a half as a place of pilgrimage. Already in 1387, as we learn from the grant of

¹ "Notre Dame de Lorette," pp. 196, 197.

indulgences by Pope Urban VI., published by his successor in 1389, the actual fabric itself was "held in great veneration." Popular imagination had therefore to reckon with the established character of the sanctuary, and in any case would have been controlled by the ecclesiastical authorities on the spot, as well as by the Roman Pontiffs who were in close touch with Lauretan affairs from the time of Urban VI. onward.

In the light of documentary evidence "the statue which was later called miraculous" has nothing whatever to do with the origin of the so-called legend. "Until the appearance of the legend of the translation, this statue was the treasure of the church of Loreto," says the Canon. The implication is that at first the statue was the great object of veneration, and that this veneration was afterwards transferred to the sanctuary itself. The Canon in this case is guilty of what I must qualify as a barefaced misrepresentation of facts. In his book we read: "Here we have the solid foundation of devotion to Our Lady of Loreto—it will be seen that the first papal bulls speak of no other—a statue with a figure of the Virgin and the Child Jesus" (p. 157). I pointed out, in *The Casket* of March 14, that in these words "Canon Chevalier sets down what he

ought to have known to be false," for that, according to himself, Urban's is the very first of the papal bulls, and it has never a word at all about the statue, but refers in set terms to the "church," i. e., the sanctuary, as being "held in great veneration." Whatever excuse there might have been for such perversion of facts in his book, there is none at all now. I may add that the very next papal document, the letter of Nicholas V. in 1450, has not a syllable about the statue or any special veneration shown to it, but speaks of "the immense devotion" which the faithful have for the sanctuary—"ex ingenti, quam ad Ecclesiam Beatae Mariae de Loreto, Recanatensis diocesis, gerunt devotione."

I note here that in *The Month* (No. 561), Father Thurston cites a German authority to show that "the story of the Santa Casa having been brought by angels through the air; from Nazareth to Tersatto in 1291, and again from Tersatto to Loreto in 1295 [1294]" finds its explanation "in the fact that a miracle-working picture [no doubt he means the statue] of the Madonna was brought from Tersatto to Loreto by some pious Christians and was confounded with the ancient rustic chapel in which it was harboured, the veneration formerly given to the picture afterwards passing to the

building." Canon Chevalier quotes Professor Dante Vaglieri as affirming that certain exiled Servians, at the close of the thirteenth century, came to settle in the Marches, bringing with them an image of the Virgin. That these exiled Servians came to settle in the Marches seems to be matter of record; that they brought with them a picture or pictures of the Madonna is quite probable; but that they brought the statue which stands to-day in the Holy House is a conjecture pure and simple, without a scrap of documentary evidence to support it. Hence Father Thurston no longer ventures to put the thing forward as a "fact," and in the Catholic Encyclopædia presents it as an "hypothesis," or guess, saying that there "is much to suggest" it affords a "sufficient explanation" of the ancient tradition of Loreto. Much to suggest it, indeed, if you assume that the people of the district of Loreto, and the priests, and the Bishops of Recanati under whose jurisdiction the shrine of Loreto was at the time, and the multitudes who came on pilgrimage thither from all parts were fools, or at least were in collusion to deceive the rest of the world. Already in 1313, as we have seen, St. Mary of Loreto was frequented by pilgrims, who appear even at that time to have received miraculous favours there,

as indicated by the numerous votive offerings with which they enriched the shrine and adorned the statue of the Virgin. Now, supposing the statue was the great object of devotion then, and that it was known as the one brought by exiled Servians from Tersatto a few years before, is it likely that, in a highly enlightened country such as Italy then was, people would transfer their devotion from the statue to the building, and that priests and bishops would approve of their doing so? But the transfer of popular devotion from a statue to a building, strange as it would be in itself, is far from being all our learned and scientific friends have to account for. What they have to account for is the deep-rooted and widespread belief that the building itself was the very House which erstwhile sheltered the Holy Family at Nazareth. It is difficult enough to imagine how popular devotion among an enlightened people could pass from a picture to a building. But that, assuming this singular thing to have happened, there should then begin to arise in the minds of those people the strange and silly notion that the building itself was brought thither by angels from Nazareth—I say strange and silly on the supposition that the building was known to have been erected on the soil of Italy—this is too inconceivable

to be seriously thought of. Our friends must have reached a desperate pass in their effort to account for the ancient tradition of Loreto when they put forward so wild a guess as this.

But the facts are clean against the guess and the explanation that rests on it. It is absolutely false and opposed to fact that the picture or statue was first the object of popular devotion. The first papal bulls, as shown above, have nothing to say about the statue, nothing about "the miracle-working picture;" it is the building itself they speak of as "held in great veneration" (bull of 1387), as the object of "immense devotion" (bull of 1450). If ever there was an explanation that doesn't explain, it is this one, which has for preamble a bit of guesswork, unsupported by documentary evidence, and is itself openly and flatly contradicted by the very documents cited as bearing it out.

The Canon affirms that "Paul II., in 1470, still limits himself to saying that the church contained an image of the Blessed Virgin, etc." Is this a lapse of memory? At page 231 of his book we have: "Paul II. in 1470, declares it [the church, i. e., the sanctuary known as the Holy House] to have been miraculously founded"—the very words of the bull, "*miraculose fundatam.*"

The fact that the Nativity of the Blessed Virgin was the special feast of the Holy House until past the middle of the 15th century admits of a very simple explanation, quite different from that which the Canon offers. The ancient tradition which is the tradition at Nazareth this day makes the house the scene of Our Lady's nativity and the grotto the place where she was when the Angel brought her the message. We may well believe that this was originally the received tradition at Loreto, too; but in course of time it became obscured, and at last it was assumed that the annunciation, as well on the part of her who received the message as on that of him who delivered it, took place in the house.

In this connection Count Leopardi, whom our learned friend holds in high esteem, makes an acute observation that is well worth recording. He points out that the feast of the Nativity was from a very early time¹ known as "the feast of St. Mary of Loreto" or "the day of St. Mary of Loreto," and goes on to say: "Now the feasts of the Virgin Mary are feasts the Christian world over, and the Conception, the Annunciation, the Assumption are never called in an exclusive sense *the day of St. Mary of*

¹It is spoken of as "the feast of the glorious St. Mary of Loreto" in 1399 Cf. "Notre Dame de Lorette," p. 172.

Ravenna, the day of St. Mary of Bononia, the day of St. Mary of Rome. As then the Nativity was commonly known as *the day of St. Mary of Loreto*, we are led to believe that there must have been a special reason for it and this reason is to be found in the widespread and inveterate persuasion that the Lauretan Sanctuary was the very Dwelling in which the Blessed Virgin was born.”¹

What is the value of the extract from the book of the Assumptionist Fathers? It purports to show that “excavations conscientiously made by the Franciscans, and the descriptions of early pilgrims, would hardly permit one to connect the cave itself with the little structure of Loreto.” Happily I am able to check this statement by comparison with an authentic summary of the actual results of those excavations published in the *Revue Biblique*; 1901, t. X., pp. 489-490: “The Reverend Father Benedict Vlamink, O. F. M., publishes the results of excavations recently made at the sanctuary of Nazareth. [These revealed] a spacious basilica running west and east in the normal way; under the north transept, the grotto of the Annunciation, with three little apses in the form of a trefoil; the one to the east bears traces of mosaic on its

¹“La Santa Casa di Loreto,” p. 182.

walls; it was there, without doubt, that the altar formerly stood. The house of the Blessed Virgin rested against the rock of the grotto, on the south side, covering the space now occupied by the chapels of the Angel and St. Joachim and the great stairway. The exterior entrance to it was on the west, where an ancient stairway has been discovered, and it communicated with the grotto by a door on the north discovered by Father Benedict behind the altar of the Angel. On the south-west there has been brought to light a chamber adorned with Byzantine mosaics, with the inscription: *Koonoonos deacon of Jerusalem*; it still contains the remains of the tomb venerated by ancient pilgrims as that of St. Joseph, destroyed in the successive devastations of the sanctuary.”¹ The earliest pilgrims who give us anything like a detailed description—the accounts of others are most meagre—of the holy place at Nazareth are Abbot Daniel and John Phocas. The reader may learn from our comments on their testimonies, how well the recent findings of the Franciscans tally with them, and how imperatively both require us “to connect the cave itself with the little structure” that once stood

¹ In his “Additions and Corrections,” p. 517, our author gives the reference to the “Revue Biblique,” but does not do his readers the justice of putting before them the extract cited above.

before it. The descriptions given by the same two eye-witnesses falsify the astonishing assertion "that no ancient text gives us any information concerning the site or even the existence of the Holy House in front of the cave at Nazareth." The texts which embody those descriptions come down from the time when the house was to be seen, and actually was seen, in front of the cave. As for the absence of an Oriental tradition of the translation, it is accounted for by these facts. (1) The fall of Acre, the last Christian stronghold in the Holy Land, was followed by a general massacre of the Christians, and the old guardians of the Nazareth sanctuary, the Franciscans, were driven out or put to the sword. The first pilgrims to enter after 1291 found the Saracens in undisturbed possession of the holy place, and keeping guard over it. Those who knew the house to be in that underground place were thus no longer there to witness its removal which, in any case, must have been effected with the suddenness and secrecy befitting supernatural agency. (2) From the nature of the case, tidings of the miraculous translation would have to come from the West. And if, when the delegates came from Tersatto in 1292, and later from Recanati, in 1296, there were any Christians

still left in Nazareth, they would have been little likely to credit the report of the marvel, and less likely to enshrine in tradition the memory of an event so prejudicial to themselves.

The Canon challenges us to submit the question, as a purely historical thesis, to the faculty of letters in any university. *Will you walk into my parlor?* said the Spider to the Fly. There are too many university men in the long list of those who, as the Canon tells us, have accepted without reserve all the conclusions of his book to warrant implicit trust in the competence of such a court of appeal. That *net is broken, and we are freed*. We stand upon tradition; we will not abide by the verdict of present-day rationalistic criticism; we follow the guidance of reason enlightened by faith; and we recognize no tribunal as competent to pass upon this question but the one to which by right of supreme authority it belongs—the See of Peter, *which judges all, which is judged by none*.

IV.

Canon Chevalier complains that I have fought shy of his main positions, and confined myself to skirmishing. This plaint is without foundation in fact. The thesis of his book rests on three main arguments, two affirmative, and one negative. The former purport to show (1) that the house of Nazareth was destroyed before 1291, or, if not, was never other than the grotto visited by pilgrims since that date; and (2) that the *Santa Casa* is the old parish church of St. Mary *in fundo Laureti*. Now, as every reader will bear me witness, instead of evading these arguments, either of which would be conclusive against the tradition, I assailed them in the open, and so successfully that the Canon has been forced to abandon them. The negative argument turns (1) on the silence of contemporary records; (2) on the silence of chroniclers both Western and Eastern, during the 14th and greater part of the 15th century; (3) on Rome's tardy recognition of the miracle. To this I have opposed (1) positive prescription, resting on the immemorial tradition of two



NO. 2—THE HOLY HOUSE ENCASED IN MARBLE.

peoples and confirmed by miracles; (2) the silent testimony of monuments (chief of which is the house itself) and frescoes; (3) the difficulty, or rather impossibility, of accounting for the existence of the Sanctuary of Loreto, with its continuous history as a place of pilgrimage for six hundred years, on the hypothesis of its being other than what it is claimed to be, more especially because of the miserable inadequacy of the proffered explanations; (4) the fact that reputable annalists, Angelita, Riera, Torsellini, Glavinich, cite copies, still extant in their day, of contemporary documents attesting the miraculous translation.

The Canon avers that "the writer in *The Casket* founds the tradition of Loreto," (1) on the omnipotence of God, (2) on the consensus of opinion of a civilized people and of the local religious authorities, (3) on miracles, (4) on the assent of the Popes. This is anything but a fair statement of the matter. It would be silly to found a tradition on the omnipotence of God. Tradition is founded, not less than the written or printed document, on the trustworthiness of human testimony. It rests on the principle that men are not to be presumed to be liars and deceivers. I simply gave some reasons (*The Casket*, Jan. 24, 1907) why the received account of the miraculous translation should be re-

garded and spoken of as a tradition, not as a legend, the first being that "the account, though marvellous, is not incredible, and cannot be set aside as absurd by any one who believes in Divine Providence and in the ministry of angels." The second reason was not any "consensus of opinion" but that the account "had its origin in a highly civilized community, and was handed on with the full knowledge and approval of the Bishops of Recanati, whose strict duty would have been to prevent it from gaining a foothold among their people had it been purely legendary." The third was "the miracles without number wrought in the Holy House—the last place on earth where God would have worked miracles had the tradition been begotten in fraud and falsehood." The Canon says: "Miracles wrought in the sanctuaries of the Blessed Virgin Mary prove her goodness and power; nothing more." This is his private judgment, to which I oppose the judgment of the Holy See expressed by the Congregation of Rites—*comprobatur virtute miraculorum*. i. e. the tradition is confirmed by the testimony of miracles. There are sanctuaries and sanctuaries. The claim is made for the sanctuary of Loreto that it is the house of Nazareth, thence brought by angels. Such a claim is made for no other sanctuary of the Blessed

Virgin. If the claim is fraudulent and false, as the Canon alleges, can he, can any one, seriously maintain that the working of miracles there did not tend to establish and perpetuate the falsehood? We are confronted, not by a theory, but by a fact, for, as a matter of fact, one main reason why the Sacred Congregation pronounced in favour of the authenticity of the Holy House was the testimony of miracles. Whether the Cardinals of the Congregation took account, or inquired into the truth, of the particular miracle that the Canon is at so much pains to blazon to the world, I know not. But of this I am sure; if they did, they approached the subject in a very different spirit from that in which he deals with it. His purpose plainly is to expose the account to ridicule. He makes, however, one just observation: "For having invoked the spirit of untruth the Carmelite deserved to be deceived." Making all allowance for good faith, I cannot but deem it the height of folly to have sought testimony of the truth from "the father of lies." Of course God could compel the devil to tell the truth, but how are we to be sure in a given case that He has done so? We read in St. Luke (4 : 41) that "devils also were coming out from many, crying aloud and saying, 'Thou art the Son of God,' and that Our Lord rebuked them, and

would not suffer them to speak." According to the ancient tradition of Nazareth, a tradition attested by pilgrims at a time when the house was still there, the Blessed Virgin was in the grotto when Gabriel saluted her. In pointing out in the house the spot where she was at the moment of the Annunciation, the demon was true to the character he has borne since first he fooled Eve in Eden.

I have more than once explained why the Popes were so slow to accept the miraculous translation as authentic, and shall not now go over the same ground again. The Canon comes back to what he calls in his book "the enormous blunder" of Pope Julius II., in speaking of the Holy House as coming from Bethlehem (bull of 1507). The thing seems to have a fascination for him, but it is such fascination as the lighted candle has for the moth. I have pointed out that, a few lines before in the same bull, Pope Julius had spoken of the sanctuary as the house "where the Blessed Virgin herself was conceived, and brought up, and greeted by the Angel," and insisted that any man in his right senses must regard "Bethlehem" as a clerical error for "Nazareth," seeing that the alternative is that the Pope was so crassly ignorant as not to know that it was at Nazareth Gabriel saluted

Our Lady. I grant that the error is not a copyist's, but am satisfied that it is traceable to the amanuensis who wrote out the bull, or to the person or persons who made the first draft of it. The Pope simply failed to note the mistake on reading the document over. But not so easily can we acquit Canon Chevalier of personal responsibility for a similar "enormous blunder," viz. "Recanati" for "Tersatto" on page 85, line 25, of his *Notre Dame de Lorette*. The author of a book must bear the blame for every error in it that is not traceable to the printer, and any person who knows the purely mechanical nature of the work done by the one who sets "copy" in a printing-office will see how unlikely it is that he would set up "Recanati" if it was "Tersatto" that was given him to set up. It is the irony of fate that the Canon should, in his book, have fallen into the same kind of blunder as that in the bull of Pope Julius, which he makes so much fuss about. The bull says that a certain sanctuary, known as the Holy House, came from Bethlehem, whereas it ought to have said Nazareth, and the book says that a certain deputation is supposed to have come from Recanati in 1292, whereas it ought to have said Tersatto. *It is human to err*. Let the Canon learn from the error which is irrevocably consigned to print

on page 85 of his book the useful lesson that he, too, is human.¹

¹ The passage in which it occurs is this: "[Thomas of Novara] denies out and out the authenticity of the confrontation that is alleged to have been made (*qui aurait été faite*) by the delegates from Recanati in 1292" (p. 85). It will, perhaps, be said that the slip is in the date, which might be a printer's error for 1296. But this is barred by the fact that Thomas of Novara, in the passage referred to by the author and cited on that (p. 85) and the following page, fixes the date of the delegation, placing it "in the pontificate of Nicholas IV." St. Celestine V. succeeded Nicholas in 1294, and he, upon making *il gran rifiuto*, was succeeded before the end of the same year by Boniface VIII. Under the influence, no doubt, of Canon Chevalier's blunder, Mr. Edmund Bishop translates the words of Thomas of Novara, with interlarded comment, thus: "but how those men sent (from Recanati) in the time of Nicholas IV (that is 1288-1292, but he means, about 1296) got their proof, I cannot by any means tell." The words within brackets are a virtual interpolation. What a man says, I take it, is what he means, and Thomas of Novara says, not "from Recanati," but "for this purpose to Nazareth" not "about 1296," but "in the time of Pope Nicholas IV"—"*Illi viri, qui tempore Nicolai IV, summi Pontificis ob hoc Nazareth missi.*" It is possible that he had both delegations (1292-1296) in his mind when he wrote "*illi viri, . . . ob hoc Nazareth missi,*" but he expressly refers only to the former of the two. And the way he dates it, "in the time of Pope Nicholas IV," gives us a clue to the source on which he drew. His account was published at Venice in 1623 (*Notre Dame de Lorette*, p. 85). On the other hand, Torsellini's *Historia Lauretana*, first published at Rome in 1597, was translated into ever so many languages and ran into ever so many editions before 1623 (Ib. pp. 368, 369). Of the Italian version two editions were published in Venice itself before that year, one in 1601, the other in 1604. Torsellini's was then, as it is to this day, the classic work on its subject, to which subsequent writers went for facts and dates concerning the Holy House. Now, in chap. 2, p. 13 (ed. of 1837) we read: "*mense igitur insequenti ejusdem anni [1291], hoc est VII idus majas, Nicalao IV Pont Max (ut Illyrici annales perhibent), Deiparae domus asportatur in Europam*—In the following month of the same year [1291], that is on the seventh day before the Ides of May [May 9], in the pontificate of Nicholas IV (as the annals of

I quote from a former page a passage which Chevalier has overlooked: "It seems evident that 'Recanati' is a slip of the pen or clerical error for 'Tersatto.' Chevalier knew better than to put the delegation from Recanati in 1292; indeed, a few lines below the words cited here from page 144, he puts it in 1296; but—something happened, and the printed page records an error that was not in his mind. Does it not look as if this were a judgment upon him for his deliberate attempt to fasten a stigma upon the memory of Pope Julius II and discredit his testimony regarding the Holy House

Fiume attest), the house of the Mother of God was carried into Europe." The passage is from Torsellini as it stands, italics and all. He italicizes "in the pontificate of Nicholas IV," to show that he is quoting from the annals of Fiume. Then in chapter 4, p. 18, he has: "Ex omni numero lecti quatuor expertae fidei ac nobilitatis viri, *Hi viri Nazarethum missi*, etc." This time the italics are mine. The reader can see at a glance whence Thomas of Novara got his "illi viri, qui tempore Nicolai IV Summi Pontificis ob hoc Nazareth missi." He will note, too, the explicit citation from annals that Canon Chevalier has the hardihood to say, "are unknown, and, without any doubt at all, never existed." They are cited by four authors, one of whom made notes from them, and two of whom had copies from them in their hands when they wrote, but to the Canon they are "unknown." It is a recorded fact that the monastery in whose archives they lay in manuscript was destroyed by fire in 1629. But because there lacked a bibliographer who should go to work and publish the whole collection in a *repertoire* before the fire, the Canon is as sure as that he has hands and feet that they never existed. The simple fact of the matter is that such portions of those annals as bore upon the story of the Holy House, being of general interest, were published by Angelita and others; the remainder lay unpublished in the archives, and probably would have still lain there had they not been burnt.

by drawing attention to what is a perfectly parallel slip—‘Bethlehem’ for ‘Nazareth’—in the bull of October 21, 1507?” It is in the light of this passage that the following words from the Canon’s pen must be read: “*The Casket* reproaches me bitterly (!) with having committed a slip of the same sort as that of Julius II., by saying that the Mantuan relegates the disparition of the Holy House to the period of the Emperor Heraclius.” This is another slip, or rather an oversight. The Canon evidently overlooked the passage quoted above. I have scanned his bulky volume more closely than he my slender commentary.

“By writing: ‘In the reign of the Roman Emperor, Heraclius. . . . Then the perfidious power of Islam also prevailing. . . . Then also was the Holy House [carried away],’ does not the Mantuan give us to understand that he attaches these three events to the same epoch?” No, he does not. In the first place, both “tum” and “tunc,” in post-classical Latin, often have the sense of “deinde”= “after that time.” And then the words that follow “Tunc etiam Mahometi invalescente perfidia,” are “coepit cultus Dei et fides orthodoxa ab Oriente in Occidentem transmigrare.” The whole sentence may be translated: “After this [i. e. after the invasion of Palestine by the

Persians under Chosroes, referred to in the preceding paragraph], the perfidious power of Islam also gaining the upper hand, the worship of God and the orthodox faith began to pass from the East to the West." Now it took a long time for Mohammedanism to gain the upper hand in Palestine. Even after the Seljukian Turks became masters of Jerusalem, the Crusades established for a time the worship of God and the orthodox faith in the East. The words of the Mantuan, "Then also was the House itself by the ministry of Angels transferred to Dalmatia, [and set down] near a town called Fiume" are thus properly understood as referring to the time when the power of Islam finally prevailed in the Holy Land. He goes right on to say that the House remained "aliquamdiu," i. e. for some time, in Dalmatia, but that "perhaps because it was held in less veneration there than was befitting, owing to the carelessness or ignorance of the people," it was transferred to Italy. These words imply that the stay of the House in Dalmatia was not very long. For "aliquamdiu," Jerome of Raggiolo, who wrote his account more than a decade before the Mantuan, has "aliquot annos," some years. If you refer the "tunc" and "tum quoque" of the Mantuan's account to the time of the Emperor Heraclius (610-641),

you make him say that the House remained in Dalmatia upwards of six centuries and a half, for in the next paragraph he dates its arrival in Italy shortly before 1296.¹ If this were what he meant, he would have for "aliquamdiu" put "diu," or "diutissime," or "plura saecula." Nor would he have assigned the ignorance of the people as a reason why the Holy House was not duly venerated and consequently not permitted to remain there, seeing that it is absurd to suppose either that such ignorance could have endured for more than six centuries and a half or that the House would have been suffered to remain there for that length of time without the veneration that befitted it. I freely grant that the Mantuan's dating of the successive events is about as vague as it can be, but his mind is to be gathered from the context as a whole, not from a rigid and mechanical construing of a "tunc" and a "tum."

I leave Canon Chevalier to settle with Mgr. Verde the question whether the latter's disclaimer is to be regarded as "diplomatic." Here once more are the words: "The undersigned entirely disavows the words attributed to him, because he is conscious of never having uttered them. He would go further and say that he could not have uttered them for the

¹ "Notre Dame de Lorette," 224.

reason that they are altogether contrary to his mind, whether on the question at issue or the like questions." If it be diplomacy for a man to use such words as these without the slightest intention of committing himself to the meaning which they bear on their face, then, for the sake of plain people who love the truth, diplomacy ought to be labelled *the art of saying, in the most positive and emphatic way, the thing which is not.*

No one ought to take it ill, and I fancy no one does take it ill, that Canon Chevalier should declare to be false certain papers concerning the Holy House, provided he justifies his declaration by bringing forward positive proof of their falsehood. It is one thing to declare, it is quite another thing to prove. For example, at page 315 he declares that the annals of Fiume, which contained the report of the deputation sent to Nazareth on the arrival of the Holy House at Tersatto, "are unknown, and, without any doubt at all, never did exist." Well, Angelita declares that he received from Tersatto manuscript copies from these annals; Riera declares that he received from the archives at Tersatto an authentic copy of the report above referred to; Glavinich, himself a Dalmatian, declares that he made notes from the original of that document,

which was still preserved in his day in the monastery at Tersatto. Has the Canon any positive evidence to set against the testimony of these three witnesses? Not one shred. He does but assert that, if the annals really existed at Tersatto, they could not fail to have been published by some earlier annalist or historian. But it is matter of record that the archives of Tersatto perished in a fire which destroyed the monastery there in 1629, and the Canon himself fails to cite any work published in Dalmatia in which the documents preserved there could have been inserted before that date.

Our learned friend plumes himself on his freedom from prepossession or bias in the study of this question. No doubt this "*a priori* indifference" is an admirable frame of mind for the historian, generally speaking, and one which should be assiduously cultivated. But it has its necessary limitations, as well on the part of the subject as of the subject-matter. When this latter is a point of revealed truth, like the resurrection of Our Lord, such indifference is virtual disloyalty to the faith, and may easily lead a person to make shipwreck of the same, as is shown in at least one modern instance. In the domain of faith, it is private judgment—the fallible judgment of the individual against

the infallible judgment of the Church. When the matter is one that lies within the borderland between faith and reason, as in this question of the Holy House, indifference need not endanger Catholic faith but does not well consort with Catholic piety. For my part, I confess frankly that I am not indifferent on this question. I wish with all my heart to uphold the old tradition, the old belief that has been so dear to so many sainted souls. But I should scorn the idea of clinging to a "pious fraud," and therefore welcome every ray of light that can be shed upon the subject, from whatever source and with whatever consequence.

On the part of the subject, the limitations of this indifference result from our very nature. Man is a complex being, possessed of many faculties which, consciously or unconsciously, play upon and influence one another. You cannot shut up human reason in a compartment by itself; you cannot get it to do its work in isolation, without prompting from the will or from the heart. No man born of woman can ever succeed in divesting himself wholly of prepossessions, though he may prevent and ought to prevent his prepossessions from consciously influencing his judgment. Even your cold man of science has his unconscious bias, if no other than the ineradicable desire to

square facts with his "working hypothesis." Now Canon Chevalier's book has its working hypothesis, which is that the Holy House of Loreto is a "pious fraud." It betrays its presence in the very first chapter, where the author tells us that he knows not whither his inquiry shall lead, and yet records his conviction that the work will "do a service to the Catholic Church by ridding her of a fable" (p. 8). It shows itself in his wresting the testimonies of pilgrims to prove that the Holy House was destroyed at Nazareth; in his mutilation of Daniel's testimony; in the extravagant estimate he sets on Suriano's words; in the undue stress he lays on such a trifle as the slip in Pope Julius's bull; in his ignoring the tradition of Tersatto; in the contempt he pours upon the early historians of the sanctuary, and the charges of dishonesty and fraud he so freely prefers against them; it shows itself in short, on almost every page of his book. I am willing to believe that he was himself, and is, unconscious of this bias. But I cannot conceal my feelings of surprise and sorrow that a Catholic priest should have set himself with so much eagerness and zest to the task of tearing down what he should have counted his proud privilege to uphold by every means consistent with honesty and truth.

V.

In an article covering seventeen and a half pages of *L'Ami du Clergé*, of February 7, 1908, Canon Chevalier replies to a critique of his *Notre Dame de Lorette*, which ran through seven issues of that periodical from January to June, 1907. The gist of it is the same as the reply published in these pages, but there is a notable difference in the treatment of the question as to the existence of the Holy House in Nazareth. It will be remembered that the Canon has very little to say on this point in the reply that we publish, and even pretends that, in his book, he does "not lay much stress on the destruction before 1291 of the house of Nazareth." In *L'Ami du Clergé*, on the other hand, he devotes four pages to the subject, seeking to make good the position taken in his book that the house ceased to exist at Nazareth long before the closing years of the 13th century. I quote and translate:

"It remains but to inquire what there was in the great basilica of Nazareth while yet it stood intact before its destruction in 1263.

"Assuredly no traveller, no pilgrim saw there a house resembling in the least the little church of Loreto. When they speak of Mary's house or chamber they always refer to the grotto and the narrow vaulted crypt of mason-work that served as a vestibule or lobby. Grotto and crypt are generally confounded the one with the other in the accounts that have come down to us. That the crypt in question had been built, at least in part, on the site of an ancient house or primitive chapel of somewhat larger dimensions, may without difficulty be admitted; the thing indeed is even probable.

"The grotto was not so deeply buried under the pavement of the church as it is now. Access was had to it by two doors, one on the west, fronting the entrance to the church, the other on the east, fronting the choir.

"On the west there was a descent of five or six steps only, or about five feet at most, which brought one, not into the grotto nor even in front of it, for the stairway was not situated where it is to-day, but into the species of lobby or vestibule above referred to. This lobby corresponded pretty much to the chapel of the angel which now stands on the spot, though it was smaller. It was little more than six feet in width.

"On reaching it, if one had come down by

the stair on the west, one had on one's left an excavation known as the tomb of St. Joseph, and then the grotto itself of the Annunciation. If one went down by the opening on the east, one had on one's right the holy grotto. If a person examines carefully a plan of the ancient basilica and of the present church, he will understand this better, and the accounts given by the ancient pilgrims will be sufficiently clear. But once more, let us not forget that for them, as indeed for us, the grotto and its ante-chamber of masonry represent or take the place of the ancient abode of Mary and Joseph."

This purports to be an exact description of the holy place at Nazareth as it was seen by pilgrims in the 12th century. Whence is it drawn? From the accounts of the pilgrims themselves? By no manner of means. With the exception of the statement touching the two doors and stairways that led from the transept of the ancient basilica down into the grotto, it is drawn partly from the description of the place given by Quaresmius in the 17th century and partly from the Canon's imagination. Quaresmius mentions the "six steps," but John Zuallardo, who was there before him, in 1586, says there were twelve (*si descende per dodici scalini*)¹ and John van Kootwyck, who was

¹ "Notre Dame de Lorette," p. 82.

there in 1598, also says there were twelve (*per gradus lapideos duodecim.*)¹ When Quaresmius visited the place, the débris had been cleared away, the foundations of the Holy House had been laid bare, and the chapel of the angel had been rebuilt, under Thomas of Novara, all of which involved changed conditions. It would appear that the other two pilgrims speak of the steps cut in the rock at the back of the grotto, while he refers to the stairway on the west leading into the grotto by its mouth at the southwest corner, but in any case he speaks in the past tense (*per sex gradus descendebatur*) of a state of things that no longer existed, and his "six steps" (about five feet) do not indicate the height of the pavement above the floor of the grotto, for the pavement was no longer there. Eugene Roger (1634) gives the height of the roof of the grotto as "eight or nine feet."²

What of the lobby or vestibule that is alleged to have occupied, at least in part, the site of some ancient house or primitive chapel in the 12th century? First of all I would call attention to the fact that the Canon contradicts himself in his statements about it. He tells us that the door on the west led, not into the grotto nor even in front of it, but into the lobby or

¹ Ib. p. 83.

² Ib. p. 96.

vestibule, and yet in the same breath affirms that the lobby in question corresponded pretty much to the chapel of the angel, which to-day stands right in front of the grotto. But the most remarkable and astonishing thing is that this vestibule is simply a figment of the Canon's imagination. Not a single one of the numerous pilgrims whose testimonies are cited in his own book ever as much as mentions it even once.¹ They speak of "grotto," "crypt," "house," "cell," "under ground chapel," "chamber," "sanctuary" (*sacellum*), but of "vestibule" or "lobby"—never. And this is true not only of the pilgrims before 1291, but of the pilgrims in every century since then. Quaresmius, who gives the most detailed account of the place that we possess, speaks of the grotto as being in his day supported or strengthened (*fulcitur*) on the north, south and west by ancient walls (*vetustissimis muris*), and of "another chapel, higher, longer, and more elaborate, now known as that of the angel, set up on the south side," i. e. in front of the grotto, but never even hints at the existence of a "vestibule" or "lobby."

¹ Dean Stanley (quoted at p. 111) uses the word, but means by it something very different from Chevalier's "vestibule." He says the Franciscan monks at Nazareth show to any traveller the space on which the holy house stood before its flight. That space is a vestibule immediately in front of the "sacred grotto." Here the word "vestibule" designates the space where once stood the holy house, and now stands the chapel of the angel.

Where, then, did the Canon get evidence of its existence in the 12th century? Nowhere. I repeat, he built this lobby up in the workshop of his own imagination, and he did so because the testimonies of twelfth century pilgrims establish conclusively the fact that there was at that time underneath the pavement of the ancient basilica *a building of stone distinct from the grotto, and he is set upon showing, by hook or by crook, that this could not have been the ancient abode of the Virgin of Nazareth.* This is a serious charge to make against Canon Chevalier, but I shall prove it up to the hilt.

Let us remember that it was while the ancient basilica was still standing, i. e. in the 12th and first half of the 13th century, this vestibule is alleged to have been in the place once occupied by "an ancient house or primitive chapel." The Canon himself has taught us to insist upon documentary evidence for every allegation of this kind, and it shall go hard but we will better the instruction. Of the pilgrims who visited Nazareth during that period only three give any description of the holy place, Belardo of Ascoli, the Abbot Daniel, and John Phocas. The first named found "the cell of Our Lady a crypt, . . . inside eastward not built of stone but hewn out of the rock, about four paces long and as many wide." This "cell"

was the grotto, and Canon Chevalier is now forced to admit, as against the position taken in his book, that one side of this "cell" was of masonry, though he maintains that this was "the vestibule or lobby into which one entered on descending two (?) little stairways." Now Belardo says not one word about this alleged "vestibule." He does but imply that the grotto was closed in at the mouth by a wall of masonry—"inside eastward not built of stone but hewn out of the rock." He does not give us any hint of what was on the other side of this wall. But Daniel and John Phocas shall tell us presently.

It is amusing to find the Canon, who was never in Nazareth, undertaking at so great a distance of time and place to correct the eyewitness Belardo as to the "orientation" of the grotto. The latter says that the crypt "inside eastward" was "hewn out of the rock;" Chevalier says "he is mistaken; it is the southern part that was built up and the northern that was hewn out of the rock." Belardo describes the grotto as he saw it on entering by the door at the southwest corner, by which Daniel also had entered a few years before him, and his description is quite accurate as far as it goes. The whole interior of the grotto proper lay "inside eastward" of him from that point and on his right hand, to the

south, was the wall of masonry with its "little opening" or doorway leading into the house, as described by Daniel.

Daniel tells us that both stairways, that on the west as well as that on the east, led down "*into the grotto.*" That by "grotto" he means the cave, not what the Canon calls the "crypt" and would have us believe to have been a sort of vestibule or approach to the grotto, is plain from the sequel. "Entering by the west door," continues the Russian pilgrim, "you have on your right a cell, to which access is had through a small opening, and in which the Blessed Virgin lived with Christ. He was reared in this holy cell, which contains the bed on which Jesus slept." Clearly, then, the stairway on the west led into the cave, not into a "species of lobby or vestibule." Nor was what Daniel calls the "cell" a vestibule or lobby, but the *house of Nazareth*, where, according to the living tradition of the place when Daniel visited it, Our Lord was brought up, where He slept, where He dwelt with His Virgin Mother.

This is confirmed by another item of Daniel's account. He tells us that "in the place where Gabriel stood, there was set up, on a column, a little round altar in marble," and that this place was "three sachines," or twenty-one feet, from the door opening into the grotto. Now, as

the grotto was only about four paces from wall to wall, it is evident that the altar must have been in the "cell" or house. Moreover, Daniel says the Blessed Virgin was seated "in the same grotto, near the west door," when Gabriel came. Supposing that the door was even half the width of the grotto, or say seven feet, from the opening that communicated with the "cell," Gabriel would have stood within the cell, about 14 feet. And as he must have stood opposite to Our Lady so as to be visible through the opening, the cell must have been a deal wider than the "six feet" which the Canon allots to his fictitious "lobby."

Here again, in Daniel's account, the Canon insists that the "orientation" is at fault. He says that in chap. 89, where the Russian Abbot describes the entry into the grotto by the west door and what one saw on entering, we must without any doubt read "east door." In this he shows ignorance of what he might easily have informed himself about. This "east door," by which John Phocas entered, opened into the upper cave, whence a stairway cut in the rock led, and still leads, into the grotto of the Annunciation. Moreover, this stairway brings one to the back of the grotto, within a few feet of the west wall, and one has, on one's right, this solid wall of rock. But on his right,

as he entered, Daniel found "a cell with a little entrance, in which the Blessed Virgin lived with Christ." "If one went down by the opening on the east," says the Canon, "one had on one's right the holy grotto." Not so, but one had it straight in front of one, and the greater part of it on the left. The "east door" was so-called because it opened on the east into the upper cave, whence you went down in a southerly direction, reaching the back of the grotto.¹ But let us suppose for argument's sake and by way of exhausting all possible ways of approach, that one could in Daniel's time enter the grotto direct from the east, or again by the mouth at the northeast corner. As may be seen at Nazareth to-day, the grotto opens to the south and has its three sides, west, north, and east, hewn out of the living rock. Now, if one entered from the east, one would have on one's right the north wall at the back of the grotto, and if one entered by the mouth at the northeast corner, one would have immediately on one's right the east wall of the grotto. It is plain that in neither case would one find on one's right the wall of mason-work, with its little opening, and the "cell" where dwelt Jesus and Mary, all of which the Russian pilgrim found on his right after enter-

¹See Fig. 2.

ing the grotto. Therefore we may not, and can not read "east door" in this passage of Daniel, for in view of the actual situation of the grotto, there is absolutely no other possible way in which his statement about the opening and the "cell" can be verified or understood except by assuming what he himself tells us in so many words, that the door referred to was the one on the west.

One other point remains to be noted in this connection. "On reaching it [i. e. the lobby]," writes Canon Chevalier, "if one had come down by the stair on the west, one had on one's left an excavation known as the tomb of St. Joseph, and then (*ensuite* beyond it or further on) the grotto of the Annunciation." Daniel is the only pilgrim before 1291 who mentions this tomb, and he does so in these words: "On entering this same grotto by the west door, one has, on one's left, the tomb of St. Joseph, spouse of Mary, who was buried there by the pure hands of Christ." Here once more this eye-witness contradicts Chevalier. On entering, by the west door, says Daniel, not, mark you, a *lobby*, but *this same grotto*, which he has described as communicating, through an opening, on the right of one who entered by the same door, with the cell in which Our Lord and His Blessed Mother lived, one has, on one's

left, "the tomb of St. Joseph." The tomb was thus in the grotto itself, not in an "excavation" alleged to be on the hither side of it to one who entered from the west, and by the side of a "lobby" which no one ever saw—for the excellent reason that it wasn't there.¹

I have said that John Phocas, who visited Nazareth some seventy years later than Daniel, went down into the grotto by the east entrance. He does not tell us this himself in so many words, but it follows from a comparison of his account with that of the Russian pilgrim. "Having entered through the opening into the cave," he says, "you go down a few steps, and there you see that ancient house of Joseph." On the other hand, what Daniel says is: "Entering by the west door, you have on your right a cell, to which access is had through a small opening, and in which the Blessed Virgin

¹The Canon's article in "L' Ami du Clergé" is illustrated with what purports to be a cut of "The Holy House of Loreto in the 14th Century." The house is represented as a structure with gables, having a door and a window on the side, and surmounted by a little belfry and cross. The wall is about 18 feet in height, and the gable end over 21 feet. The Canon wants to know how such a building as this could have been "cribbed, cabined, and confined" within his "lobby," or have stood under the pavement of the ancient basilica. The solution of the problem is very simple. The cut or drawing in question is just as fanciful as the "lobby;" for the window of the Holy House of Loreto is on the end, not on the side. Besides, there is some reason for believing that the walls of the Holy House, when it stood in the crypt of the ancient basilica, were only 9 or 10 feet high. Beyond that height they are to-day of brick.

lived with Christ." It is the same "house of Joseph" that is described by both, but from different points of view. "The grotto" and the "cell" together formed the "house." But one who came in by the west entrance did not see the "house" at first; he saw the "grotto" and the "opening" into the "cell"; whereas one who came in by the east entrance first descended "a few steps," that is, about halfway down the stair cut in the rear or north wall of the grotto, and then all at once saw before him "the ancient house of Joseph," to wit, the "grotto," and through the opening in the wall of masonry that closed the mouth of it to the south, on the right of one who entered at the southwest corner, the "cell" that stood in front of it. Let it be observed, too, that the door by which Daniel entered was level with the pavement of the grotto, for immediately upon entering he found on his right the opening into the cell, and he tells us that the Blessed Virgin was seated near this same door when she received the Angel's message. On the other hand, the door by which John Phocas entered, opened, as he tells us, into a "cave, not deep underground, but near the surface," and he had to go down, after entering, by a stair to gain the level of the lower cave and of the cell. And what did he see, on going down? Did we not know that the

lower cave or grotto was there, and is there, we should not have known it from his account. But he describes with some detail the "cell" in which Daniel says the Virgin lived with Christ, and in which, as we have seen, must have stood the altar that the latter says was set up on the spot where the Angel appeared. In "the place where the annunciation was made" he found "an altar," and "on its right the little room in which the ever Virgin Mother of God slept," and "on the left another little room without light in which Our Lord Christ is said to have lived after the return from Egypt until the beheading of the Baptist." No "lobby," no "vestibule" this, but, as the man who saw and describes it tells us, "the ancient house of Joseph."

What Canon Chevalier really aims at showing in *L'Ami du Clergé* is that the "cell" spoken of by Daniel as the place where Our Lord was brought up and where He lived with Our Lady must be identified with the grotto or cave. "If one went down by the east entrance," he says, "one had on one's right the holy grotto." Now if it were true, as the Canon alleges, that there is an error in Daniel's account, and that we must read "east door" where the text has "west door," the passage, as amended, would run: "On entering by the east door, one has on

one's right a cell, to which access is had through a small opening, and in which the Blessed Virgin lived with Christ." Clearly this "cell" would be the "holy grotto" if one had the grotto on one's right on coming down by the east way. According to the Canon's "orientation" both doors, that on the east as well as that on the west, opened into a lobby that ran in front of the grotto, and the latter would have been on the right of one entering from the east. Let us assume for argument's sake that this was the case, and see how it stands (1) with tradition, (2) with the accounts of the pilgrims.

1. The tradition of the Universal Church from the earliest times is that the Holy Family lived in a house, not in a cave. This was the tradition in Nazareth during the 12th century. John Phocas tells us he saw there "the ancient house of Joseph." In a passage omitted by Chevalier, Daniel speaks of a first apparition of the Angel Gabriel to Our Lady at the well, and then goes on to say: "Returning to Nazareth, into her house, she sits down in the place described above, and sets herself to spin the purple, and it is then that the Archangel Gabriel presents himself before her, standing in the above mentioned place, and that he announces to her the approaching birth of Christ." The foundations of the house are still

there in front of the grotto. When, therefore, Daniel distinguishes, as he does sharply, between the grotto and the cell where the Blessed Virgin lived with Christ, and where the bed on which Our Lord slept was pointed out to him, he means by the cell the house. "And entering (the grotto) . . ." are his words, "you have on your right the cell, etc." True, in one place, he speaks of the whole underground space as "this sacred grotto," but as he says it was the house of Joseph and as he clearly indicates the existence of a wall between the grotto proper and the cell into which one passed through "a little opening," his words must be taken in a large sense to signify that both grotto and cell, or house, formed in his time the crypt of the ancient church. To sum up, tradition affirms the existence of a house; the foundations still to be found there attest the fact; Daniel says the Blessed Virgin returned to her house from the well; there was pointed out to him at Nazareth the dwelling in which the Blessed Virgin lived with Christ; if this dwelling was a cave, then is Daniel in disaccord with the tradition which he himself witnesses to by speaking of the house, and singularly inaccurate in the use of words when he calls that a grotto which he should have called a lobby, and that a cell which he should have called a grotto or cave.

2. (a) What Daniel calls the grotto was, he tells us, small but deep. If this were the supposed lobby, it could not be so described, for the lobby, as we shall see presently, would have had to be considerably over twenty feet long, and as, according to the Canon, the descent to it on the west was but six steps, it would have been only about five feet deep. (b) Daniel tells us that the place where the Blessed Virgin sat when the Angel came was "in this same grotto near the west door." If this west door opened into a lobby, these words are utterly misleading. (c) If the place where tradition says she sat were a lobby in Daniel's time, what he calls the house of Joseph would have been but a cave and its vestibule or lobby. (d) According to Daniel, the place where the Angel stood was 21 feet from the door. If this place was in a lobby, the so-called lobby would have been long enough to be a house. And as the width is not given, we may suppose it to have been wide enough. (e) Both doors are supposed to have opened into a lobby. Now John Phocas entered by one door, and saw the ancient house of Joseph. According to Canon Chevalier, what he saw was a lobby. (f) Canon Chevalier makes the cave to have been the place pointed out to those pilgrims as that in which the Blessed Virgin lived with Christ. In this place, as John

Phocas describes it, there was an altar, and on the right of the altar the room where the Blessed Virgin slept, and on the left the room where Our Lord lived after the return from Egypt. Is it possible to find so much space in a cave four paces long by as many wide? (g). John Phocas says the room where Our Lord lived was without light, that is, without a window. This implies that the Blessed Virgin's room had a window. Therefore it could not have been in the cave. (h) The door by which John Phocas entered opened into a cave. If both doors opened into a lobby, it follows that the lobby, too, was a cave! (i) After entering by one of the doors, John Phocas descended a few steps, and then saw the ancient house of Joseph. If both doors opened into a lobby, the lobby must have been several feet above the house and yet on the same level with it! For when Daniel entered by one of the doors, he found himself on a level with the cell where the Blessed Virgin lived with Christ. (j) Supposing there to be an error in Daniel's account, and that we should read "east door" where the text has "west door," then on entering by this door the pilgrim would have had, not only the grotto, but the so-called tomb of St. Joseph on his right. They are both on the same side, as may be seen to-day, on the left of one who

approaches the underground place from the west, on the right of one who approaches it from the east. But the pilgrim Daniel says distinctly that he found the tomb of St. Joseph on the left. There is, therefore, no error in the account, and it remains true beyond question that Daniel entered by the door on the west.

From this it follows that the door on the west led into the grotto of the Annunciation, as the pilgrim himself says. If what he entered first were a lobby several feet west of the southwest corner of the grotto, he would have had on his left both the tomb which is spoken of as that of Joseph and the grotto of the Annunciation. This Chevalier himself says in as many words; for, to repeat the citation already given, he tells us that "if one had come down by the stair on the west one had on one's left an excavation known as the tomb of St. Joseph and then the grotto of the Annunciation." And of course any one who goes to Nazareth, or studies a plan of the underground place, can see this with his own eyes. Now what does Daniel say of that which he saw on entering by the west door? Here once more are his exact words: "Entering by the west door, you have on your right a cell into which there is a small entrance, and in which the Blessed Virgin lived with Christ." On his right, if he had entered from

the west the space in front of the excavation spoken of as the tomb of St. Joseph, he would have had nothing at all. On his right, if he entered the grotto of the Annunciation at the southwest corner he would have whatever stood in front of the grotto to the south. And he tells us himself explicitly that he saw there the "cell" in which the Blessed Virgin lived with Christ. Therefore it was the grotto of the Annunciation he entered by the door on the west. And therefore, too, the four walls within which dwelt Jesus and Mary at Nazareth stood there in the time of Daniel.

I have said that no one ever saw Canon Chevalier's "lobby" in the underground place at Nazareth for the excellent reason that it wasn't there. To add further proof seems needless, yet may place the thing in a clearer light. If what one entered on going in by the west door were the "lobby," instead of the grotto of the Annunciation, the excavation known as the tomb of St. Joseph would be on one's left indeed, but could not be seen, because the wall of the "lobby" would stand between one and it. Now Daniel actually saw on his left what was pointed out as the tomb of St. Joseph, for he tells of the whitish liquid resembling holy oil which oozed from the wall near the tomb. It follows that he saw it where he says he did:

“On entering this same grotto by the west door, you have on your left the tomb of Joseph, spouse of Mary.”

Let the reader also recall another statement of Daniel's: “The space occupied by this sacred grotto was the house of Joseph.” Here “grotto,” as we have seen, is taken in a large sense for crypt, and includes the grotto proper and the “cell” where Jesus and Mary dwelt. On Chevalier's hypothesis it would include the grotto proper and the “lobby,” a walled structure running up in front of it, between twenty and thirty feet long, and only about six feet wide. Is it likely that so curious a construction as this could have passed at any time for the house of the Holy Family?

Furthermore, on Chevalier's hypothesis, what Daniel calls the “cell” would have been the grotto, and what he calls the “grotto” would have been the “lobby” or “narrow vaulted crypt of masonwork.” Accordingly, when Daniel says, “In this same grotto, near the west door, is the place where the Blessed Virgin Mary was seated, . . . when Gabriel appeared to her,” we should have to understand him to mean that she was seated in the “lobby”—something that is in contradiction to the whole tradition of the place. Enough to cite Belardo who tells us that “the cell of Our

Lady was a crypt, inside eastward not built of stone, but hewn out of the rock." He plainly means the sacred cave.

Once more, if the space described by Daniel as having been the house of Joseph had for boundaries the walls of the sacred cave and the walls of the vaulted crypt of masonwork or "lobby," the excavation known as the tomb of St. Joseph would have been wholly outside those boundaries, as being hollowed out in the hill beyond and behind the walls of the "lobby." Yet what Daniel speaks of as the tomb of Joseph was certainly within the boundaries of the place which he describes as "the house of Joseph." For he tells us that on entering the enclosure, which he calls the "grotto," he had on his left the tomb, and saw the wall near it whence oozed the whitish liquid.

Daniel's testimony on this point is confirmed by Theodericus, who visited the place before the end of the same century. After having gone down "fifteen steps" he came into "a subterranean cave," and on "the left, i. e. toward the north," or back of the grotto, saw the tomb of St. Joseph.¹

¹Quoted by Fr. Viaud, O. F. M. in his "Nazareth et ses Deux Eglises" p. 22. Chevalier does not publish the account of this pilgrim.

It would appear that the space west of the Chapel of the Angel and in front of the excavation wrongly supposed to be the tomb of St. Joseph was covered over with débris during the middle ages and was never at all seen by any of the pilgrims who visited the place after 1291. This is also Father Viaud's belief, for he says at page 84: "All this part was unknown to the pilgrims of the middle age." And yet at page 93, and again at page 111, he assumes that the tomb spoken of as that of St. Joseph by the pilgrim Daniel is the one which stood in that part.

FATHER HOLWECK AND THE HOLY HOUSE OF LORETO

The Rev. F. G. Holweck writes on this subject in the *Pastoral-Blatt*. He reviews a work by Father Eschbach in defence of the Lauretan tradition, and finds it unconvincing. To the present writer it is plain that Father Holweck has not made such a study of the question of Loreto as would warrant him in pronouncing upon it.

He says that Pope Julius II in his Bull declares the Blessed Virgin to have died in Nazareth. "Evidently," he writes, "Julius II understood the words 'ubi quando de hoc saeculo nequam ad sublimia assumpta extitit orando quiescebat,' about the death of Mary." If this is evident, how comes it that Canon Chevalier understands the words of the burial of Mary?¹ The Pope speaks neither of her death nor of her burial in the Holy House, but of her repose in prayer there. The words are properly translated, "where she was wont to repose in prayer when she was caught up from this worthless world to the lofty things" (of

¹ "Notre Dame de Lorette," p. 324.

God, that is). It is only a very superficial study of the passage that would lead one to refer "assumpta" to the assumption of Mary. What we have is not "in coelum assumpta" but "ad sublimia"—a very different thing. And then "quiescebat" by itself means neither to die nor to be buried (for which "requiescere" is sometimes found), but to rest. In the sense of "to die" it occurs only in combination with such phrases as "beato fine." Moreover, it is the imperfect tense, not the historical. Now the imperfect tense, as anyone even moderately well versed in Latin ought to know, is used of what happened repeatedly or was wont to happen in the past—not of what happened and could happen only once, as a person's death or burial. And what of "orando?" Just as "Errando discimus" means and can only mean, "We learn by erring," i. e. by making mistakes, so "Orando quiescimus" means and can only mean "We repose by praying," i. e. in prayer. The gerund "orando" is an ablative of means. If the Pope wanted to tell us that the Blessed Virgin died while praying, he would have written "inter orandum obiit," or "orans obiit," or, instead of "obiit," used one of the many other verbal forms signifying to die with which Latin abounds. But even if we suppose that "orando" is used in a loose way for

314 THE HOLY HOUSE OF LORETO.

“orans,” and that “quiescebat” is used for “quievit” in the sense of “died,” and that “ad sublimia assumpta” means “taken up to heaven,” what we have is this: “where when she was taken up from this poor world to heaven she died praying.” But what we ought to have, to express the meaning correctly, is: “whence she was taken up into heaven when she died.” The position of the temporal clause, introduced by “quando,” plainly indicates that the fact signified by the verbal form “assumpta extitit” took place before, or at least at the same time as the fact signified by “quiescebat.” Now the assumption took place neither before, nor at the same time as, but after the death. And so on all accounts the construing of the words to mean the death of Mary must be ruled out.

Father Holweck says he read Mr. Garratt's book, “Loreto, the New Nazareth,” whence he gathered that, “According to Garratt the Holy House of Loreto stood in front of the bigger cave. The one door connected it with this cavity, and the only exit was through the upper grotto. From the house itself there was no door to the outside.” Here are Garratt's words: “The doorway that opened into the Cave is the one that we see walled up at Loreto. The dwelling had also two doors leading from the Cave into

roads or gardens on both sides of the House. The place occupied by the west door is situated in the southwest corner of the large Cave, between the foundations of the Holy House and the lower part of the rock. The second door, opening out upon the slope of the hill, was at the top of the staircase tunnelled in the rock, and was situated either on the east side of the little Cave, in which we find a walled-up doorway, or else close to it, at the east end of the rock-cut passage alongside of it, where the eastern entrance is at present." (p. 46, ed. of 1895). The statement attributed by Father Holweck to Mr. Garratt, namely, that the only exit from the House was through the upper grotto, is in flat contradiction to Mr. Garratt's words, where he tells us that "The Dwelling had also two doors leading from the Cave into roads or gardens on both sides of the House," and describes minutely the two exits.

"The following," writes Father Holweck, "may serve as an illustration of the distortion of a text by the Loreto defenders. Belardo d'Ascoli, who was in the Holy Land 1112-1120, says in his *"Descriptio Terrae Sanctae"*: 'Cella Dominae nostrae in quam ingressus est angelus ad eam crypta fuit syta ex latere civitatis intus tamen ex parte orientis non ex lapidibus facta sed in saxo cavata longaque passus 4 et totidem

ampla.' A reasonable translation would be: The cell of our Lady into which the angel entered was a crypt, situated towards the town, but inside of it, toward the east; not made of stone but hollowed out in the rock, four steps long and as many wide." He then proceeds to give what he deems the distortion of this text. But the real distortion of it is his own rendering from the Latin. First of all, he inserts punctuation marks to suit his preconception of what the meaning of it should be. In the text as quoted by Chevalier, who got Father Erhle, S. J., to transcribe it for him from the unedited MSS. in the Vatican Library, there is a comma after "civitatis," no comma after "orientis," a comma after "facta," and no semi-colon. Father Holweck, by the way, does not seem to have read Chevalier's book at all. As for his "reasonable translation," one quite fails to see how "syta ex latere civitatis" can mean "situated toward the town," or how a dwelling situated toward a town could be described as "inside of it." The obvious meaning of "ex latere civitatis" is "on one side of the town." And how is a dwelling to be on one side of a town and at the same time inside of it? One who goes to Nazareth, as I have gone, will find the Grotto of the Annunciation where it has always been, where Belardo places it, that is,

at the edge of the town. Besides—and this is decisive of the matter—it is not at all “toward the east,” but toward the south. Mary’s Well is on the east side of Nazareth, but the Grotto is on the south side, at the foot of the declivity on which the town is built. There it always has been, of course, and there Belardo saw it. Therefore, it is a real distortion of the text to make him say that he found it inside of the town, toward the east. Belardo’s text, according to the punctuation of the Vatican codex, is properly translated: “The cell of our Lady, into which the angel came to her, was situated on one side of the town, inside eastward not made of stone, but hollowed out in the rock, four steps long and as many wide.” To one who entered the Grotto by the door at the southwest corner, as Belardo appears to have done, the whole cave would lie “inside east,” and on his right, to the south, would be the mouth of the cave. The words of Belardo, therefore, are rightly taken to imply that there was a wall of masonwork stopping up the mouth of the cave in his time; in other words, that the Holy House still stood in front of the Grotto.

In the Grotto of the Annunciation at Nazareth are to-day and have been since the 14th century, two large columns of red granite, one

of which is broken at the base, and hangs from the vault, to which it is fixed by an iron clasp. Father Holweck says one of these was there already in the year 1106, and quotes in proof the pilgrim Daniel: "There is also a column at which is a round marble altar." These are Daniel's words, as quoted by Chevalier: "There is set up on a column a little round marble altar." This is a very different thing. It is only one who has been in Nazareth, and seen the columns in the Grotto with his own eyes, that can realize how absurd it would be to talk of setting up an altar on either of them.

"They never used brick in Nazareth," says Father Holweck. I was in Nazareth four years ago, and saw piles of brick that had been dug up from the ruins of the old basilica. There were two kinds of brick, one something like our own, which the Franciscan Father made out to be from the time of the Crusaders, who restored the ancient basilica; another plainly much older, and dating from the time when the basilica was first built.

"Why," asks Father Holweck, "did not the angels also transfer the sanctuaries in Jerusalem or Bethlehem, still more exposed to profanation?" We are not supposed to assign a reason why God works a miracle in one case, and does not in another. That is His business,

not ours. But it happens that we can assign an excellent reason in the present instance. The great sanctuaries of Jerusalem and Bethlehem, namely, Calvary, the Holy Sepulchre, and the Cave of the Nativity, "could not," as Suriano says of the Grotto of the Annunciation at Nazareth, "be removed without removing the mountain." Of course God could remove mountains, too, if He wanted to. But we can easily conceive why He should see fit to remove a sacred dwelling from the Holy Land and leave the mountains there.

Having made a pretty exhaustive study of the documents bearing on the translation of the Holy House, and having visited the sacred sites in Palestine, I here wish to record my deliberate conviction that the traditions followed by the Franciscan Fathers at Nazareth to-day conflict in some important particulars with the ancient traditions of the place. The Franciscan traditions grew up after the last of the Cruaders had been driven out or put to the sword, and the place had passed completely under the domination of the Saracens. Thus the Franciscan Fathers say that the altar which marked the place of the Annunciation was always in the Grotto, whereas the pilgrim Daniel, in the 12th century, makes it plain that this altar was in the House, where the Angel

320 THE HOLY HOUSE OF LORETO.

Gabriel stood; and does not at all mention an altar as being in the Grotto, where the Blessed Virgin "was spinning purple yarn, near the door." Again, Father Meistermann understands the Greek pilgrim, John Phocas, in the 12th century, to be describing what he saw under the church that was built on the spot where stood the Workshop of St. Joseph (cf. *New Guide to the Holy Land*, pp. 394-395). But any unbiassed reader of the account left us by John Phocas will conclude that he is describing what he saw in the crypt of the Church of the Annunciation, where both he and Daniel found the Holy House, forming at the time, with the Grotto, the underground chapel or crypt. The same Father Meistermann says: "About 1624 there was cut in the rock, at the end of the grotto, a narrow staircase of sixteen steps which leads to the sacristy and to the monastery." This staircase cut in the rock must have been there long before the 17th century. Daniel, in the 12th century, tells us that there were two passages by which one could go down from the left transept of the basilica into the grotto, one on the east, the other on the west. Now the one on the east must have led down by the stairway cut in the rock, for that is the only way one could enter the grotto from that side. In

fact John Phocas went down by the stairway cut in the rock, as his own words make plain. Father Meistermann misquotes and consequently misunderstands Quaresmius in reference to this stairway. What Quaresmius says is not, as Father Meistermann has it, "Thus we can descend from our house in the northern part of the grotto by a staircase recently cut," but "Thus we can descend from our house in the northern part (that is, as he explains in the preceding sentence, the northern transept of the old basilica to which the monastic buildings were annexed—*erant annexae habitationes*) by a stairway recently made" (*Elucid. Terrae Sanctae lib. 7, c. 1, pereg. 3ae.*) It will be observed that Quaresmius does not say "cut" but "made—*factam.*" And it is clear he does not mean that this stairway, then recently made, led into the grotto, for he goes right on to say, in regard to the place to which one descended: "It," i. e. the basilica, "was of considerable length, and had a bell tower on the west, which still stands." North of the northern transept of the basilica, where the monastery stood, the hill rises steeply, and the ground where the basilica once stood was much lower, and could be reached only by a stairway. When Quaresmius visited the place the

entrance to the Grotto was through the Chapel of the Angel, built on the spot where the Holy House once stood, and one entered the Chapel of the Angel by a door on the west side. The door was first on the east, when Quaresmius first came thither, but this door was afterwards, as he tells us, closed up. At this time, therefore, the way to reach the Grotto from the Franciscan monastery was by a stair which led down into the north transept of the ancient basilica, or rather to the place that had been dug out when the foundations of the basilica were laid, for of the basilica itself nothing remained but part of the north wall; thence one entered the Chapel of the Angel, and then the Grotto. All this is clearly indicated in the text of Quaresmius to which the reference is given above.

FATHER BEISSEL AND THE HOLY HOUSE OF LORETO.

I.

The Rev. Stephen Beissel, S. J., has a lengthy article on this subject in the *Stimmen aus Maria-Laach*. The editor of *The Catholic Fortnightly Review* pronounces him "a specialist of international repute on subjects pertaining to the cult of the B. V. Mary," which he may well be; but what he does not know about the question of Loreto would fill volumes. A man like Father Beissel, who has never been either to Loreto or to Nazareth, is not competent to interpret aright documents concerning places and things that one should have seen with one's own eyes to get a right idea of. This, too, was Chevalier's fatal mistake. He undertook to discuss the question of Loreto at long range, without making a personal study of buildings, places, and sites—an indispensable preliminary procedure.

Father Beissel is one of a galaxy of learned men who acclaimed Canon Chevalier's Notre Dame de Lorette on its first appearance as dis-

324 THE HOLY HOUSE OF LORETO.

crediting completely the tradition of Loreto, and who, as the Canon himself tells us, "accepted without reserve" his conclusions, and "registered no objection to the force of his chain of arguments." Since then, however, he has modified somewhat his favourable opinion of the work of the great French bibliographer, and he now finds it "undeniable that Chevalier goes too far in many of his assertions, has made mistakes in his citations, and has failed to bring forward or has overlooked important facts" (*Stimmen aus Maria-Laach*, Dec. 1910). Before dealing with his paper, I wish to set down some facts bearing upon the discussion of the question of Loreto, and the revival of interest in it within the last decade.

In 1900 there was a Catholic Scientific Congress at Munich in Bavaria. Many learned Catholics were gathered there, among others Father Hartmann Grisar, S. J. In the course of a speech at the Congress, Father Grisar urged that it was high time for Catholic writers eminent for scholarship and critical research to rid the Church of some of the embarrassing legends that clung about her, mentioning among others the tradition that the House of the Holy Family at Nazareth had been transported by angels to Loreto. It was Father Grisar who encouraged Canon Chevalier to

undertake the refutation of the Lauretan tradition, on the lines of historical criticism.¹ It was at his instance, too, that Dr. Huffer of Bavaria, who was President of the Munich Congress, set himself to disprove, on petrographical lines, the identity of the Santa Casa of Loreto with the House of Nazareth.

Why, it may be asked, should Father Grisar have made himself so busy in this matter? The reason is to be sought in something that went before. In the early nineties of last century Pope Leo XIII propounded the following query to a Commission of learned men at Rome: "Does the miraculous translation of the Holy House of Loreto from Nazareth admit of being proved historically?" Father Grisar was a member of the Commission, and their unanimous verdict was: "No; it does not." In spite of this, the Pope shortly after, in January, 1894, issued a Brief in which he re-affirmed, in the plainest and most unequivocal terms, the tradition of the miraculous translation, thus showing that the Church relies not on contemporaneous or quasi-contemporaneous documents merely for proof of what happened in the past, but on monuments (of which the Holy House itself is one), and tradition, and prescription, and the testimony of miracles. The mem-

¹ "Notre Dame de Lorette," p. 463.

bers of the Commission, no doubt belonged to the school of historical criticism, which sets tradition and the argument from prescription aside, and demands documentary proof of every statement put forward regarding the past. Hence dissatisfaction with the Pope's procedure, and the subsequent assault, all along the line, on the tradition of Loreto.

Of Dr. Huffer Canon Chevalier writes: "After congratulating me on my vigorous campaign for disembarassing the Church of a legend without historical foundation, Dr. Huffer assured me that his own conclusions were identical with mine. The unsatisfactory state of his health had alone prevented him from finishing and publishing his work." The work has not yet been published, and is not likely ever to be, for the excellent reason that Dr. Huffer would only stultify himself by attempting to prove that the materials of the Holy House came from the environs of Loreto, or are other than Palestinian. He sent Dr. Schafer to Loreto in 1905 to examine the Holy House. This Dr. Schafer could not do without permission of the Bishop of Loreto, for which accordingly he applied. There was question of an examination by means of the stonemason's instruments, which the Bishop, because of his veneration for the sacred relic, was unwilling

to allow. But he told Dr. Schafer that he had himself erected a fac-simile of the Holy House in the neighborhood, and that a study of it might be made. Dr. Schafer came straightway to Signor Gianuizzi, archivist of the Holy House, and told him he had permission from the Bishop to proceed with the examination. The archivist, not doubting him, went with him, and, together with a mason and an engineer, they probed the walls of the Holy House, but ascertained nothing save what was already known, viz., that the walls, for the first ten feet or so, are of a peculiar species of limestone, very hard, of a very fine grain, and of a yellowish red colour, and that the mortar contains little bits of charcoal. All this I had from the lips of the Bishop and the archivist Gianuizzi, four years ago at Loreto. It may speak well for Dr. Schafer's zeal for science, but not for his scrupulous regard for honesty and truth.

Regarding the materials of the Holy House, Father Beissel writes: "I may add here, as a matter of curiosity, a so far overlooked passage from the book of Henry Sudolf of Bentheim (p. 384), a superintendent of the Lutheran Church in Harburg. He visited Stephanus Moyne in Leyden (Holland), and this gentleman told him that the learned and truth-loving Girmondas had made a trip to Loreto to see

328 THE HOLY HOUSE OF LORETO.

whether the House there was of Oriental structure, and found that, in matter and form, it resembled the other houses around, and that the stones had been taken from a quarry not very far distant. Accordingly he went to his great friend [Cardinal] Baronius and told him how he had ascertained the spurious character of the sanctuary and Baronius had promised him to take such fables out of his *Annals*, but did not keep his word." Father Beissel does but bring discredit upon himself and the great Society of which he is a member by digging out of its grave this silly story told at third hand to the detriment of Baronius. The fable is Henry Sudolf's, whether invented by himself, or got at second hand from the "truth-loving" Girmondas.

Horatius Tursellinus, S. J., who was long years resident at Loreto before Girmondas's time, tells us in his *History of the Holy House*, bk. 2, ch. 26, that Pope Clement VII sent three men to Nazareth, who brought back samples of stone thence that were found to be identical with the stone of the Holy House. He adds: "It is a well-known fact that there is no such stone in Picenum (the territory wherein Loreto lies), all buildings, however old, being made of brick because of the lack of stone suitable for building." "Having often visited Nazareth be-

tween the years 1690 and 1714," writes Garratt (*Loreto: The New Nazareth*, pp. 27-28), "a retired Archbishop of Eden, George Benjamin, visited Loreto and volunteered to sign a declaration as to the nature of the stones. After a careful examination of the stones at Nazareth, in 1732, a confessor of Santa Maria Maggiore, Rome, Joachim Ferrarese, declared on oath that he was convinced that the stones of which the Chapel of the Angel at Nazareth is composed are in every way similar to those of which the Santa Casa of Loreto is constructed. A celebrated painter, Dominic Anthony Muratori, of the Academy of St. Luke at Rome, also declared on oath, in a document dated September 24, 1733, that he had observed with scrupulous attention the nature of the materials employed in the construction of the Santa Casa of Loreto, and that he was certain they are natural stones of such a quality as he had never seen in any country he had passed through."

Nor is this all. Monsignor (afterwards Cardinal) Bartolini, visited Nazareth in 1855, took thence samples of stone, got permission from Pius Ninth to take two bits of stone from the Holy House, sent the four specimens to Prof. Razzi of the Sapienza, to be examined, and the latter pronounced them to be physically and chemically identical (*Sopra La Santa Casa di*

Loreto, pp. 72–79. Furthermore, Father Ratisbonne, the Jew who was converted by an apparition of the Blessed Virgin in the Church of San Andrea delle Fratte, Rome, recounts, in the *Annals of Our Lady of Sion*, Vol. 4, n. 10, 1858, how Prof. Faller, a distinguished teacher of chemistry in Oxford University, went to Loreto and to Nazareth of set purpose to disprove the identify of the Santa Casa with the House of Nazareth, but ended by being so convinced of their identity that he became a convert. Finally, the present writer went to Loreto four years ago; examined carefully the walls of the Holy House; went afterwards to Nazareth; examined the stones there; found a certain kind of stone identical with that in the walls of the Holy House; took thence specimens of it that are still in his possession; returned to Loreto a second time; was more convinced than ever of the identity of the stone by comparison made on the spot; went with Signor Gianuizzi, archivist of the Holy House, to Monte Conero, where it was alleged by the Marquis Nembrini Gonzaga the same kind of stone was to be found; got specimens of the stone there that are likewise still in his possession, and is as sure as that he has eyes and hands that it is not the same as the stone of the Holy House. A paper setting forth these

facts was published first in the *Annals of the Holy House* and afterwards in *The Ave Maria*.

Now, either Father Beissel is cognizant of what has been recited above regarding the materials of the Holy House, or he is not. If he is not, he is quite too ignorant to write upon the question. If he is, why does he suppress those testimonies and drag into print the mendacious story of Henry Sudolf and his "truth-loving" Girmondas?

II.

In the course of his article, Father Beissel writes: "Tradition shows the place in Nazareth where Gabriel came in to Mary (Luke 1:28). Above this place was built very early, perhaps already in the 4th century, a basilica, which was destroyed by the Mohammedans. The Christians built later on, partly using the old foundations, a smaller church. Under both edifices was shown a cave, in which, according to old tradition, the angel announced unto Mary." This account, so far as it regards the Church of Annunciation at Nazareth, is incomplete, and hence inaccurate. The fact is that the ancient basilica, which had been in great part destroyed by the Saracens, was restored by the Crusaders under Tancred. It was not till 1720 that the present church was built. When Father Beissel says that an old tradition points to a cave as the place where the angel announced unto Mary, he follows the later or Franciscan tradition, which grew up in Nazareth after the place had passed finally under the domination of the Saracens. According to the ancient tradition of the place, which the

Crusaders found there, Gabriel was in the house, when he made the annunciation, and the Blessed Virgin in the cave or grotto. This is shown conclusively by the testimonies of the Russian monk, Daniel, and the Greek priest, John Phocas, who visited Nazareth in the 12th century, while it was yet in possession of the Crusaders. The former tells us that, on going down into the grotto, one found "on the right hand, a cell, with a little entrance, where the Blessed Virgin lived with Christ." This cell, distinct from the cave or grotto, must have been the cottage of the Holy Family. It is called a cell because it was under the pavement of the church, and formed part of an underground chapel or crypt. Moreover Daniel tells us that the place where the angel stood was three "sagunes," or 21 feet, from the door that opened into the place where Our Lady was. And as Our Lady was, according to the living tradition of the place when Daniel visited it, inside the grotto, near the west door, and as the grotto even to-day when it has become somewhat enlarged, is barely 18 feet from wall to wall, where it is widest, it follows that the angel must have been in the "cell" or cottage which then stood in front of the cave. "There are three sagunes," says Daniel, "from the door of the grotto to the place where Gabriel

334 THE HOLY HOUSE OF LORETO.

stood; in that place is set up on a column a little round altar in marble.”¹

John Phocas came to Nazareth some seventy years after Daniel, towards the end of the 12th century. He found “in the place where the annunciation was made,” which Daniel describes as “the place where Gabriel stood,” the altar that Daniel refers to, “and on the right of the altar a little room where the Blessed Virgin always lived.”² He goes on to say: “On the left of the place of the annunciation is seen another little room without light, where Our Lord is said to have lived after the return from Egypt until the beheading of the Precursor.” The expression I have rendered “little room” is in the original Greek, “oikiskos,” which may mean either “little house” or “little room,” but must here be understood to have the latter meaning, because Phocas speaks of the whole dwelling, which comprised the cottage and cave and which formed in his time the crypt of the Church of the Annunciation, as “the house (oikia) of Joseph.”

In his “Nazareth et ses Deux Eglises,” (Paris, 1910, p. 115), Father Prosper Viaud, O. F. M., writes: “According to the pilgrims

¹ “Notre Dame de Lorette,” p. 32.

² *Ib.*

³ *Ib.* p. 36.

of the 12th century, there were in the sanctuary, that is, in the small lower basilica [so he designates the underground chapel or crypt], two distinct parts; one a front or fore part, where two things were pointed out: (1) near the door, the place of the Blessed Virgin at the moment the angel appeared to her; (2) at the farther end, the cell or room where she lived. After this, a second part, the grotto, where in like manner two things were venerated: (1) at the farther end, to the east, the place of the angel when he appeared to the Blessed Virgin; (2) at the farther end, to the north, a room supposed to have been that in which Jesus lived after the return from Egypt till the beginning of His public ministry." It would be difficult to find worse confusion than this. It is a statement of the matter utterly at variance with the testimony of Daniel and John Phocas. To begin with, the front or fore part first spoken of, in which, near the door, the place of the Virgin when the angel appeared to her is said to have been pointed out, is represented as being distinct from the grotto and outside of it. Now the pilgrim Daniel, who is the only one that mentions the place where the Virgin was when the angel came in to her, tells us expressly that it was in the grotto, near the west door as one

entered. "In this same grotto, near the west door," are his words as cited by Father Viaud himself at page 19, "is the place where the Blessed Virgin was seated . . . ' when Gabriel presented himself before her." In the second place, the cell or room where she lived is said by Father Viaud to have been at the farther end of this front part, whereas Daniel plainly implies that the cell was separated by a wall from the place that he first entered, for he says, "Entering [the grotto] by the west door, you have on your right a cell, into which there is a little entrance, and in which the Blessed Virgin lived with Christ. He was brought up in this sacred cell," Daniel goes on to say, "which contains the bed on which He slept. It [the bed, not of course the cell, as Father Viaud strangely misconstrues the thing] is so low as to seem almost on a level with the floor." Again, the place where the angel stood is said to have been in the grotto, which is contrary to what both Daniel and John Phocas tell us. For the former, as we have seen, says the place where Gabriel stood, and which was marked by an altar, was 21 feet from the door of the grotto, and therefore must have been in what he calls "the cell in which the Blessed Virgin lived with Christ." And the latter tells us that on the right "of the place where

the annunciation was made," i. e., where Gabriel stood, was the little room where Mary always lived, and on the left the room without light where Christ lived after the return from Egypt. From the account given by Phocas, which is more detailed, we gather that "the cell in which the Blessed Virgin lived with Christ," spoken of by the Russian pilgrim, had three divisions; one where the altar of the Annunciation stood; on the right, the bedroom of the Blessed Virgin; on the left, the bedroom of Our Lord, which was "without light." This latter expression implies that the bedroom of the Blessed Virgin was furnished with a window. And as a matter of fact the Holy House of Loreto has a window, and one only, on the west end, which corresponds exactly to the one that would be found in the bedroom to the right of the altar of the Annunciation, as described by John Phocas. Now, it is plain that, even if there were space within the grotto for these three divisions, there could be no window there. Moreover, "the cell" in which, according to Daniel, the Blessed Virgin lived with Christ, must contain both her bedroom and that of Our Lord, for Daniel says he saw there the bed in which Jesus slept. But Father Viaud has the Blessed Virgin's bedroom in the fore part, or ante-room, outside of

338 THE HOLY HOUSE OF LORETO.

the grotto, and Our Lord's bedroom in the back part of the grotto, towards the north; whence it appears how signally he has failed to interpret rightly the testimonies of the two pilgrims cited above.

There is, indeed, a third testimony cited by Father Viaud, that of Theodericus, and it is this that he follows rather than the testimonies of Daniel and John Phocas. But the words of Theodericus are too obscure and vague to throw light on the meaning of the words of the other pilgrims. Besides, Father Viaud interprets them in the false light of the later or Franciscan tradition, which places the altar of the Annunciation, erected on the spot where Gabriel stood, in the cave, though it is certain from the combined testimonies of Daniel and John Phocas that it was in a place flanked by two little rooms, one of which had a window, and therefore not in the cave at all.

"In the account given by Phocas," says Father Beissel, "there is no mention of a square stone-built room in front of the grotto which could have been carried to Loreto a hundred years after. The pilgrim tells us in plain words: 'Joseph's house was transformed into a beautiful church. On the left of the church there is a grotto (*spelunca non in terrae visceribus patens, sed superficie tenus hians—*

Allatius's transl.)' In this grotto, this house of Joseph, Phocas distinguishes three rooms, to be seen to-day in Nazareth: the chamber of the annunciation, the room wherein Mary dwelt, and the room where Jesus dwelt." According to Father Beissel, the Holy Family had no dwelling in Nazareth other than a grotto or cave. He maintains that the pilgrims found only a grotto in the place of the Annunciation. This is true of the pilgrims who visited Nazareth after 1291; it is not true of those who visited the place before then. One of the former, Nicholas de Poggibonsi, distinguishes sharply between the grotto, where the Blessed Virgin was when Gabriel came, which he speaks of as "camera" or room, and the house, which he calls "casa," and of which he says, "and the house stood up against a stone grotto," where the past tense indicates that the house had been there but was there no longer.

The Pilgrim of Piacenza, about 570, is the first to mention the Blessed Virgin's house. "The house of the blessed Mary," he writes, "is a basilica."¹ With this is to be compared the expression of Phocas "The house was transformed into a basilica." What do these expressions mean? Plainly they are not to be

¹ "Notre Dame de Lorette," p. 323.

taken literally. It would be absurd to suppose that those who set up the basilica first pulled down the house, or made any change in it save what might be needful for the conservation of so precious and venerable a relic. The basilica was for the house, not the house for the basilica. Phocas himself, in fact, tells us expressly that the house was still there, and that he saw it: "Having entered the cave [the upper cave since known as the Virgin's Kitchen], you go down a few steps, and then see that ancient house of Joseph."² The house is said to have been transformed into a basilica when a basilica was built to enclose it.

But our neo-critical friends are loth to admit the existence of the house. Father Beissel says that the word "domus" means here "the grotto which served as a house for the Holy Family." He brings forward no proof, and it seems that the wish is father to the thought. Let me sum up briefly the presumptive evidence and proofs to the contrary. (1) It is not to be supposed that the Holy Family lived in a cave.¹ (2) The pious musing of the Church from the earliest times centres in "the cottage of Nazareth," just as it does in "the cave of Bethlehem." (3) The ordinary, every-day meaning of "house" is "a building intended

¹ *Ib.* p. 27.

² *Ib.* p. 36.

as a home or place of work for human beings " (Standard Dictionary), and one of the canons of right interpretation is that words are to be taken in their ordinary, every-day meaning, unless there is evidence to the contrary. (4) After going down into the grotto by the west door, Daniel found on his right "a little entrance" into "the cell where the Blessed Virgin lived with Christ." Now this "cell" must have been a building, because it stood apart from the cave, whence it was separated by the wall through which there was "the little entrance." (5) Daniel found the altar that marked the place where Gabriel stood 21 feet from the door of the grotto, and hence outside of the grotto (which measures only 18 feet at the most) and within "the cell where the Blessed Virgin lived with Christ." (6) Phocas found this same altar, which marked the place "where the annunciation was made," i. e., where Gabriel stood, in a place where it was flanked by two "little rooms," the one on the left being "without light," the one on the right, occupied by the Blessed Virgin, having a window (for the contrast with the other implies this), and being therefore in a house, not in a cave. (7) At Walsingham, England, there is a fac-simile of the House of Nazareth dating from the 11th century, and in the

Church of St. Stephen, at Bologna, Italy, a fac-simile of the same dating from the 5th century. These were built while the House was yet in Nazareth, and are most convincing proofs of its existence. If there had been nothing but a grotto at Nazareth, it is artificial grottos, not walled dwellings, that would have been set up to represent it, just as we find such imitations of the Grotto of Lourdes in many places throughout the Catholic world.

“In this grotto, this house of Joseph, [to quote again the words of Father Beissel], Phocas distinguishes three rooms, to be seen to-day in Nazareth: the chamber of the annunciation, the room where Mary dwelt, and the room where Jesus dwelt.” If Father Beissel had gone to Nazareth, instead of writing on the question in his easy chair, he would not have penned this statement, which anyone who has been to Nazareth knows to be false. There are no three rooms to be seen in the grotto. The grotto is to-day divided into two parts by a wall which runs from west to east, leaving at the east end an open passage about the width of a door. This wall is of mason-work, and must have been built after the twelfth century, for none of the earlier pilgrims mention it, and their description of the grotto implies plainly that the wall was not

there when they visited the place. Suriano, toward the end of the 15th century, is the first to indicate the existence of the wall, where he says the grotto is "about sixteen braza square, with two little chambers one by the side of the other, in one of which lived Joseph and in the other the Blessed Virgin."¹ What Suriano says of the two little chambers having been occupied, the one by St. Joseph, the other by the Blessed Virgin, is simply said out of his own head and cannot be squared with the accounts of the earlier pilgrims. But at any rate it is plain from his testimony that there were no three rooms to be seen in the grotto, and that neither Phocas nor any one else ever saw in the grotto the third division which Father Beissel describes as "the chamber of the annunciation," because it was not and is not there to be seen.

¹ "Notre Dame de Lorette," p. 62.

III.

I have shown that Father Beissel is in error where he affirms that there are to-day to be seen in the grotto at Nazareth the three rooms spoken of by Phocas in the twelfth century. The grotto is divided into two by a wall which does not reach all the way across, and this partition itself seems to have been made in relatively recent times, for there is nothing to indicate its existence in the accounts of the earlier pilgrims. But just in front of the grotto there stands to-day a small structure known as the Chapel of the Angel. When the original chapel was built it is very hard to say. The first pilgrims who visited the place after 1291, the date which tradition assigns to the translation of the Holy House from the spot, speak only of the grotto, which Ludolphe of Sudheim (1336-1341) calls "a very pretty chapel," and Nicholas di Poggibonsi (1345) a "chamber" (camera). That he means the grotto is plain from the context; for he says that "within is the column which the Blessed Mary clasped in affright when the angel greeted her," and the column in question stands to-day where it

stood in Poggibonsi's time, in the grotto. Frescobaldi (1385) tells us that the place "where Our Lady received the annunciation is a subterranean cave, like that of Bethlehem." As late as 1485 Francesco Suriano finds only a grotto in the place of the Annunciation, which he calls "the true house of the Blessed Virgin," and which, he says, "could not be carried away without carrying away the mountain." It seems beyond doubt that if there were in Suriano's time in front of the grotto a walled structure corresponding to the present Chapel of the Angel, he would have mentioned the fact. The first writer who makes distinct mention of it is Quaresmius (1626). His words are: "On the south side (of the grotto) there has been set up another chapel, higher, longer, and of better workmanship, which is now called the Chapel of the Angel."

In 1620 the Franciscan Thomas of Novara, discovered in the place where the Chapel of the Angel now stands, the foundations of the Holy House of Loreto. Then for the first time the Franciscans had acquired from the Emir of the Druses possession of the holy places in Nazareth, and were able to make excavations and clear away the detritus. These are the words in which Thomas of Novara announces his discovery: "Starting from the old and true

346 THE HOLY HOUSE OF LORETO.

foundation, and drawing a straight line of measurement from it, the place of Nazareth was, to the great joy of all, found perfectly equal, as if a footprint, to the Holy House of Loreto, and we found the foundations to correspond exactly to the walls, and the house to the foundations, place to place, site to site, space to space, at Nazareth, I say, and at Loreto."

It is important to note here that before Suriano's visit to Nazareth, in the second last decade of the fourteenth century, walls had been built to support the roof of the grotto, one on the north, which divided the grotto in two, and of which mention is made above; one on the west, extending beyond the two columns at the southwest corner; a third on the south, which closed up the mouth of the grotto, and so formed in it one of the "two little rooms, by the side of each other," mentioned by Suriano. Quaresmius attests the existence of these walls, where he says: "First there is the grotto, hollowed out in the rock, or wrought by nature itself and perfected by art. This is supported by very old walls on the north, and south, and west." Thomas of Novara, who found the walls on the south and west in a ruinous state, tells us they were made "to support the fabric and to adorn the dwelling

interiorly," and were "compacted of wrought stone and added from within by those early Christians." (1) It was when examining the foundation, under this wall at the southwest corner (he had pulled it down, he informs us, with a view to its restoration), that he discovered "the foundation of the Holy House of Loreto, two palms wide, apart from the other."

Father Beissel believes these walls were built as far back as the fourth or fifth century. "But even where, in the old documents, a walled dwelling is mentioned," he writes, "we must take cognizance of the fact that the cave in Nazareth was already turned into a chapel by the building of walls probably in the fourth or fifth century." The so-called "fact" is an assumption, without an atom of evidence to support it. It seems pretty plain, on the contrary, from the way Belardo speaks of the grotto in the twelfth century as being about "four paces long, and as many wide," that there was no partition there; while the account that Phocas gives of two little rooms, with a space between where an altar stood, cannot be made to fit the assumption of a grotto with two divisions only, seeing that there would be no space between for the altar. Upon the

¹ "Notre Dame de Lorette," pp. 85, 86. All the documents cited above are to be found in Chevalier's book.

whole, it is most likely that the walls were built after the destruction of the basilica by Bibars in 1263. The pilgrim Reffin Arfagart (1533) tells us that the ruins of the basilica "formed a sort of little hill" on top of the grotto, which might seem to need the support of stone walls to keep it from caving in.

But the question when the walls were built is incidental, and does not concern us much. The point on which stress must be laid is this: **The foundations of the Holy House of Loreto were discovered by the Franciscans beyond the grotto altogether, and right in front of it.** This is vouched for by James of Vendome, who was guardian of the Franciscan Monastery at Nazareth in 1620, when the discovery was made. He told Quaresmius, in words quoted by Chevalier at page 93, that "the House of Loreto was borne away from the holy place at Nazareth where the Chapel of the Angel is built." I have myself seen the mark that was set in the stairway leading down into the Chapel of the Angel to indicate the place where rested the wall of the Holy House that was farthest from the grotto, that is, the south wall. The reader is referred back to the words of Thomas of Novara already quoted, who adds in the same place, by way of emphasizing the absolute certainty produced in his own mind on the sub-

ject: "These observations made on the spot we record for the consolation of the faithful, that there may be no further room for doubt in so grave a matter." To seize the full import of these words, it is needful to know that Teremanus and other historians of the Holy House of Loreto relate how a deputation was sent to Nazareth from Tersatto and from Recanati, and thence brought back measurements of foundations seen before the grotto that corresponded exactly with the measurements of the walls of the Holy House. By the time of Thomas of Novara, men, it appears, had become skeptical on the point, and he, good man, on verifying as he had done, the account given by Teremanus and the others, fancied he had set the matter at rest for all time. He did not foresee nor gauge the capacity of the modern mind for doubt.

At this stage I shall set down four facts of vital moment in the discussion. (1) It is matter of history, attested by Thomas of Novara and recorded also by Quaresmius, that in 1620 there were discovered in front of the grotto at Nazareth, in the place where the Chapel of the Angel now stands, foundations that by actual measurement corresponded exactly to the dimensions of the Holy House of Loreto. (2) It is matter of history, attested by documents

350 THE HOLY HOUSE OF LORETO.

now in the archives at Loreto, that the Holy House stands without foundations on what was once a public highway leading to Recanati. (3) It is a fact more than once established by microscopic examination and chemical analysis, and confirmed two years ago by the present writer through personal investigation, that the stone of the Holy House is identical with stone found in Nazareth, and wholly different in its physical characteristics from the stone found in the environs of Loreto, or anywhere in Italy, for the matter of that. (4) It is a fact ascertained by Professor Razzi, of the Sapienza, Rome, in 1858, and confirmed by the ocular testimony of Signor Gianuizzi, archivist of the Holy House, in 1906, that the mortar of the Holy House contains tiny bits of charcoal, not used in Italy in mixing mortar, but used in Palestine. These four facts may well be left to speak for themselves. I will only add here that Father Viaud, in his *Nazareth et ses deux Eglises*, ignores completely the momentous fact recorded in the first place. It is not for me to say why he has done so, but I cannot help suspecting it is because it does not fall in with the preconceptions founded on the later Franciscan tradition which he follows throughout, and in the false light of which he interprets the testimonies of the early pilgrims.

IV.

“The old basilica in Nazareth,” writes Father Beissel, “stood with its apse toward the east, and had three naves with twelve freestanding columns. In the nave toward the north were to be seen two grottos. The smaller one was pointed out as the sepulchre of St. Joseph, the larger as the place of the Annunciation.” This last statement is in open contradiction to the testimonies of the only two pilgrims who mention the sepulchre of St. Joseph. The pilgrim Daniel says that “on entering the grotto by the door on the west, one has on one’s right the cell . . . where the Blessed Virgin lived with Christ”; that “In the same grotto, on entering by the door on the west, one has on one’s left the sepulchre of St. Joseph, Spouse of Mary”; finally, that “In this same grotto, near the west door, is the place where the Blessed Virgin Mary was seated when the Angel Gabriel appeared to her.” Daniel thus makes the grotto of the Annunciation the place where the sepulchre of St. Joseph was pointed out. With this Theodericus is in agreement, saying that

one "descends by about fifteen steps into a subterranean cave," where one finds an altar, and "on the left of the altar, towards the north," the sepulchre of St. Joseph. The tomb discovered some years ago by Father Vlamminck, in the course of his excavations, lies wholly outside the grotto of the Annunciation, toward the west, and was never seen, or at any rate is never mentioned, by any of the pilgrims. Theodericus adds that there was an altar of St. Joseph placed over his tomb. Father Viaud naively remarks that "he is perhaps mistaken in placing the tomb that he saw under the altar of St. Joseph." But where else should he have placed it save where he saw it? From the grotto of the Annunciation where he stood, he could not have seen the tomb discovered by Father Vlamminck without being able to see through several feet of solid rock. Father Vlamminck too readily supposed that the tomb which he discovered was the one mentioned by Daniel and Theodericus. He should have first considered whether such a supposition could be harmonized with their statements, in accordance with any received canons of interpretation—which it certainly can not. As for the two grottos spoken of by Father Beissel, they are still to be seen at Nazareth, one an upper one, known as the

Kitchen of the Blessed Virgin, the other and lower one being the grotto of the Annunciation. The upper and smaller one was never pointed out as the sepulchre of St. Joseph, which, as we have seen, was shown in the lower and larger grotto towards the north. What Father Vlamminck discovered is not a grotto at all, but a place for a tomb, hollowed out in the hill, and separated by at least ten feet of the soft limestone rock of the hill from the grotto of the Annunciation. This I have seen with my own eyes, and it is shown also on the second of the two plans drawn up by Father Vlamminck himself in connection with the Report of the excavations made by him at Nazareth and published in Washington eleven years ago.

I continue to quote Father Beissel: "Authentic documents prove that in Nazareth the room in which Mary conceived of the Holy Ghost is preserved to this very day in the same condition as many pilgrims saw and described it before 1291." According to the pilgrims who visited Nazareth before 1291, and who hand on, therefore, the ancient tradition of the place, the Blessed Virgin was in the grotto, "seated near the west door," Daniel says, at the moment of the Annunciation. And of course this room, the grotto namely, has remained

essentially the same during all the ages. But what Father Beissel implies is that the holy place in Nazareth, as described by the pilgrims before 1291, remained just such as it was after that date, and has remained such to this day. The implication is egregiously untrue. Father Beissel appeals to documents, and to the documents he shall go. According to the testimonies of the pilgrims before 1291, the place where the Angel Gabriel stood was marked by an altar, and was twenty-one feet from the west door of the grotto near which Our Lady was seated. Ever since 1291 it is not an altar but a huge pillar that is pointed out as marking the place of the Angel, and this pillar is within the grotto, at the southwest corner, and less than three feet from another pillar which is pointed out as marking the place of the Virgin. Now, as already observed, any spot twenty-one feet from the door of the grotto would be wholly outside of the grotto, and at a considerable distance from the place where the Virgin was, whereas, the pillar which, since 1291, has served to mark the place of the Angel is within the grotto, or rather within the space between the grotto and the Chapel of the Angel, and only about two and one-half feet from that which marks the place of the Virgin. Plainly then, there was a complete

break in the continuity of the local tradition of Nazareth regarding (1) the place where Gabriel stood, (2) its distance from the place where Our Lady was, and (3) the monuments that served to mark these places. The only way we can account for that break is by recognizing the fact that, after 1291, a complete change had come over the holy place at Nazareth, and that the later tradition is but an attempt to accommodate the circumstantial account of the Annunciation given by St. Luke to the changed conditions of the place.

Father Vlamminck in his report (with plan attached) and Father Viaud in his book assume that the pilgrims before 1291 entered the underground place at Nazareth through a building spoken of by the latter as "the front or fore part" which stood where the Chapel of the Angel now stands, and thence found their way into the grotto. One of the two pilgrims who speak clearly of the way the underground place was entered is Daniel, and the assumption in question can in no way be made to square with his words. Daniel says that there was an entrance on the west and another entrance on the east, and that "entering by the door on the west, one has on one's right a cell where the Blessed Virgin lived with

¹ "Nazareth et ses deux Eglises," p. 94.

Christ." These are the words of one who visited the place at the time, and describes what he saw with his own eyes. Now, if the entrance were, as the Franciscan Fathers assume, into a front or fore part, i. e., into a building which stood in front of the grotto and to the south of it, there would be absolutely nothing but the south wall of that building to the right of one who entered from the west, and the grotto would be on his left. Moreover Daniel says expressly that he entered the grotto itself by the west door, and that being in the grotto he found on his right the cell where the Blessed Virgin lived with Christ. It is only by wresting his words even to the extent of making him mean the very opposite of what he says, that his account can be brought into harmony with the assumption of the Franciscans. Of course it will follow from Daniel's words when taken in their natural and obvious meaning that the altar of the Annunciation, the altar which marked the place where Gabriel delivered his message, was not at all in the grotto which remains at Nazareth, although the later Franciscan tradition places it there. But it is so much the worse for that tradition if it is in hopeless disaccord with the clear testimony of an eyewitness. As a matter of fact the tradition in

question, which we first meet with in Quaresmius, who says the altar of the Annunciation was in the grotto, is in disaccord also with the testimony of the pilgrims after 1291, for the tradition which they found in the place, and which owed its origin, as said above, to an attempt to adapt the Gospel account of the Annunciation to changed conditions, pointed to a pillar near the southwest corner of the grotto as marking the spot where the Angel stood, not to an altar at the east end of the grotto. Moreover, we may find in the very name of Chapel of the Angel, given to the building in front of the grotto, an echo of the ancient tradition that the Angel was in the house, not in the cave.

John Phocas also speaks, though somewhat less fully than Daniel, of the way one entered the underground place at Nazareth, which he calls "the ancient house of Joseph," but neither can his account be reconciled with the assumption that the entry was first into a "fore or front part" and thence into the grotto. He tells of a "grotto or cave" (in Greek *speelaion*), "not deep down under the earth, but opening near the surface." Then he describes a painting of the Annunciation which he saw over the "mouth" (*stomion*) or entrance, and adds: "Having entered by the

358 . THE HOLY HOUSE OF LORETO.

mouth into the cave, you descend a few steps, and then you see that ancient house of Joseph." This grotto or cave into which Phocas first entered must have been the upper grotto, known as the Kitchen of the Blessed Virgin, for it is only of this one the words "not deep down under the earth, but opening near the surface" are true. The other grotto Daniel describes as "deep," and Theodericus says you have to go down "about fifteen steps" to get to it, which is about the number of steps in the stairway cut in the rock that connects the upper with the lower grotto. Again Phocas says that after entering this grotto, you go down a few steps, and then see "the ancient house of Joseph." As a matter of fact, about midway the stair cut in the rock you come in view of the lower grotto, and could in the time of Phocas have seen into the house through the opening or door that connected it with the grotto. If he had first entered "the front or fore part" which Father Viaud speaks of, this would have been a walled building, and he would have entered through a door, whereas he tells us expressly it was a "cave" he first entered through its "mouth." Moreover, if he had first entered below, where the Chapel of the Angel now stands, he would not at all have to "descend a few steps," for the grotto

is but two steps lower than the Chapel,¹ and he would not have to go down even these, but could have seen what was within as soon as he stood in front of the entrance to the grotto. Finally, what he would have seen there would have been a grotto only and not a house, nor would there have been space in it for the altar flanked by two little rooms which he tells us of. I repeat, then, of the testimony of this eye-witness what I have said of Daniel's, that it is only by wresting his words to the extent of making him mean the opposite of what he says you can square them with the assumption of the two Franciscan Fathers. There remains the account of Theodericus, which however, is not above suspicion on the score of genuineness. The work in which it is found "*Libellus de Locis Sanctis*," is spoken of in the *Orient Latin* (1903, p. 319) as that of "the pseudo Theodericus"; and the passage itself which embodies the account reads as if it were a patchwork of scraps of information borrowed from different sources. In any case, it, too, bars the assumption that the entrance to the grotto was through a building in front of it, for in saying that "one goes down about fifteen steps into a sort of subterranean cave (*quemdam subterraneum specum*)," it implies that the stair led one straightway into the

¹ Even the two steps are due to the fact that the foundations were not cleared out when the Chapel of the Angel was built.

360 THE HOLY HOUSE OF LORETO.

cave, not into a building which stood in front of it.

Why, perhaps it will be asked, lay so much stress upon this point? Because it is a point of capital importance. If the pilgrims of the 12th century entered what one of them calls "the ancient house of Joseph" through the grotto, as their own words plainly imply they did, it follows necessarily that the house was there then, and is to be identified with "the cell" which Daniel saw on his right when he entered the grotto by the west door, and in which he saw the altar of the Annunciation, and in which John Phocas found, on one hand, the "little room" of the Blessed Virgin and on the other "the room without light" where dwelt our Lord after the return from Egypt. On the contrary, if the theory of the two Franciscan Fathers were true, i. e., if what those pilgrims first entered was a "front or fore part," and not the grotto, then obviously the grotto or cave itself would be "the cell" in which, according to Daniel, the Blessed Virgin lived with Christ," in which the altar of the Annunciation was, and in which, he says, "everything took place." In that case, "the true house of the Blessed Virgin," as Suriano says, would have been the one "hollowed out in the hill," i. e. the grotto, "and could not have been carried away without carrying the mountain."

V.

“Nothing in favour of Loreto,” avers Father Beissel, “can be gathered from the story of the stay of the Holy House at Tersatto. Anyone who studies the documents and examines the matter critically must come to the conclusion that the legend of the latter place took shape and gained currency only after the legend of Loreto had been accepted far and wide as true.” To call the tradition of Tersatto a “legend” and to say it grew out of the other “legend”—this is a bold attempt at discrediting one of the most convincing proofs of the authenticity of the Holy House of Loreto. But it is a futile attempt. The tradition that the Holy House was first set down by the angels in Tersatto, and thence carried some three years after to Loreto, is attested by historians. Pasconio, himself a Dalmatian, declares that it was constant and uninterrupted, and “handed on to us from the men who were eye-witnesses of so great a prodigy” (*Notre Dame de Lorette*, p. 318, foot note). Glavinich, whose **History of the Madonna of Tersatto** was

published in 1648, assures us that he himself made notes from a document (subsequently destroyed in a fire with the archives of the monastery of Tersatto), which was signed by the four delegates who were sent to Nazareth on the arrival of the Holy House. The tradition is also attested by the monuments and inscriptions that are still to be seen at Tersatto. A facsimile of the Holy House stands in the choir of the Church of St. George on the spot where the House itself originally rested. The present one, built in 1614 by Francis Glavinich, cited above, who was guardian of the Franciscan monastery attached to the church, took the place of an older one of which there is mention in a Brief of Pope Martin V. under date of July 25, 1420 (**Memorie Storiche**, by Raffaele della Casa, p. 68). On the north wall of the chapel is inscribed an ancient hymn, embodying the local tradition. But it is needless here to go over ground which has been fully covered in a former chapter.

Father Beissel pretends that what he is pleased to call "the legend" of Loreto is much earlier than that of Tersatto. This is a mere guess, without any foundation in fact. Canon Chevalier sets it down as a conclusion "duly founded" on documents that "the legend regarding the translation of the Holy House did

not exist before 1472, the date of its first appearance" (p. 326.) It was embodied in what Mr. Edmund Bishop (**The Tablet**, Nov. 10, 1906), calls "the tract of Teremanus," of which he says: "It is the primary authority, and behind it we cannot go." Now Teremanus affirms expressly, as I have already pointed out, the translation of the Holy House from Nazareth to Tersatto. He says the angels bore it away from Nazareth "to the land of the Slavonians (Dalmatia), and set it down near a town that is known as Fiume," i. e., in Tersatto. If, then, to quote again the words of Chevalier, "the legend regarding the translation of the Holy House (to Loreto) did not exist before 1472," when Teremanus wrote his tract, and if, or rather since, Teremanus embodies in the same tract the "legend" regarding the translation of the Holy House to Tersatto, how does Father Beissel say that the latter "legend" is much more recent than the former? According to the tenets of his own school, he has no right to make any statement about the past that he cannot support by a document. The document in the case, instead of supporting, flatly contradicts him, which shows that he is not speaking by the card, but simply guessing—a process which, if facile, is futile as well. Here, on the other hand,

are the weighty observations of a true critic on the subject. "The story of the miraculous translation to Dalmatia," writes Count Leopardi (**La S. Casa**, pp. 127-128), "and of the subsequent translation from thence (to Loreto) has run for many centuries. It must, of course, have had a beginning; there must have been a day when people first began to talk about the thing . . . Now, if when it began to be bruited abroad, it had no foundation in fact, the Dalmatians would never dream of inventing it, seeing that, even if they had wished to gain notoriety through the alleged working of a miracle among them, they would have made up the story about some chapel that was still in their country—never about one that had been carried off. Men boast of what they have gained, not of what they have lost, and no one sets himself to lie in order to dishonour or discredit himself. Again, if the citizens of Tersatto had made the story out of the whole cloth, the people of Dalmatia would have surely shown it up, for it is not possible that a whole nation should conspire to accredit a tale the falsity of which is open to the eyes of all." These, I repeat, are the words of a true critic. Father Beissel, with his assertion that has not even the merit of being plausible, and is contradicted by documents, cuts a sorry figure beside him.

VI.

Now for a final summing up. The belief in the miraculous translation of the Holy House is in possession. It rests upon a tradition of long standing, is affirmed by Popes in official documents, and, to quote the words of the Breviary, "is proved by the testimony of miracles." The burden of proof, or rather of disproof, rests, therefore, with those who call it in question.

There are those who think the negative argument, that is to say, the absence of documentary evidence, is itself a real disproof. But not so thought the Popes. Not so thought the late Leo XIII, one of the most enlightened and scholarly of the Roman Pontiffs, who, after having received the deliberate opinion of a committee of experts that the miraculous translation could not be proved historically, did, nevertheless, affirm it unequivocally in an Apostolic Brief addressed to the Bishop of Loreto. The most that can be asked of those who uphold the tradition is that they should account for the absence of documents, and this they can do quite satisfactorily.

366 THE HOLY HOUSE OF LORETO.

How comes it, ask those who assail the Lauretan tradition, that there is no record of so marvellous a thing as the transfer of a shrine from Nazareth to Tersatto and Loreto in any extant writings earlier than 1472, some 180 years after its occurrence? Of course if the thing were to happen in our day, the news would be flashed from end to end of the earth on the instant, would forthwith be printed in the daily papers, and would eventually find its way into books. But in the thirteenth century there was no telegraphy, wireless or other; there were no newspapers; there were no books, such as we have to-day. As everybody knows, it was in 1475, three years later than the account given by Teremanus of the translation of the Holy House, that the first book was printed in English.

Furthermore, our critical friends permit themselves to forget that God works in secret. They seem to fancy the miraculous translation to have taken place something after the manner of a modern motor race or aviation meet—heralded long aforetime and witnessed by gaping multitudes. But this would be to conceive of God's way of doing things in a poor human fashion. "The Kingdom of God cometh not with observation." The translation of the Holy House took place secretly, most likely in

the dead of night. The first who saw it after knew not what building it was, nor whence it came. It was hard, and humanly speaking impossible, to know for sure that the building which had come in this strange and silent way was indeed the House of Nazareth. At the time, too, all Italy was in a state of turmoil, torn by the strife of Guelph and Ghibelline, and the Popes, to whom alone it belonged to pass final judgment on the matter, were far from the scene, in Avignon, till the latter part of the 14th century. The very first Pope crowned at Rome, after the return from Avignon, Urban VI, to wit, attests "the great veneration" in which the building was held, in a grant of indulgence to those who visited it.

It has been shown that the pilgrims Daniel and John Phocas visited the Holy House in Nazareth during the 12th century. It was then in the crypt of the basilica of the Annunciation. Every pilgrim who visited Nazareth after 1291 bears witness that the House was no longer there; all that remained was the grotto in front of which it stood. One of the pilgrims, Nicholas de Poggibonsi (1345) speaks of the House as having been there: "E era la casa appoggiata ad una grotta di sasso—And the House stood up against a cave in the rock" (*Notre Dame de Lorette*, p. 61). In 1620, the foundations of the

house that stood in front of the cave were found by Thomas of Novara to correspond exactly in length and breadth to the Holy House of Loreto. All these facts are strictly historical, resting on the evidence of extant documents.

On the other hand, the shrine of St. Mary of Loreto, now known as the Holy House, was distinct from the old parish church of St. Mary "in fundo Loreti," and did not exist in Loreto till toward the end of the 13th century. Yet, in the second decade of the following century, when it first comes into view on the hill of Loreto as a resort of pilgrims, it was already an old building, and to all human seeming liable to collapse. How do we know this? We know it from documents. Teremanus relates that the people of Recanati, on finding the frail old building without foundations, fearing lest it should fall, "caused it to be surrounded by another wall, strong, stout, and having a good foundation, as is plainly to be seen at this day" (1430-1472)—*Notre Dame de Lorette*, p. 211. This testimony is confirmed by that of Jacques le Saigne, a merchant of Douai, who visited Loreto in 1518. He saw the walls "two bricks thick built all around the holy chapel for fear it should fall." When he was in Loreto, the workmen were engaged in pre-

paring the material of the beautiful marble casing which took the place of the old wall of brick, and which still surrounds the Holy House. He tells us the brick wall was "beginning to break up," and was "about 200 years old." (Ib., pp. 287-290).

Here, then, are closely correlated facts attested by documents. (a) The pilgrims who visit Nazareth after 1291 find only the grotto there, and the foundations of the House are seen there in 1620. (b) In the year 1315 there comes into view for the first time on the hill of Loreto a building without foundations. Already at that time it is a noted place of pilgrimage. Both the stone and mortar in its walls are of Palestinian origin. On its very first appearance there it is an old building, apparently in danger of collapse. This is shown conclusively by the fact that there was built "all around," as the Douai pilgrim has it, a wall of brick, which showed signs of crumbling in 1518, was reputed to be about 200 years old, and must therefore have been put up in the early years of the pilgrimage, or near the time when the shrine without foundations first appeared on the hill of Loreto.

Now, there is simply no way of accounting for this second wall on the hypothesis put forward by the critics, that the Holy House was

built on the spot. The hypothesis is also excluded by the fact that the House rests without foundations on what was at one time a public road. The House must have been without foundations, and must have been old and frail-looking, from the time it first appeared on the hill of Loreto. Else why was the brick wall built around to encase it? Who ever heard of the like being done in the instance of a new house resting on its own foundations?

Father Beissel deems "deserving of consideration" the following guess of his own: "The Holy House stood on a hill. Around it were built some houses first; later on, a wall and a church. Was the hill then perhaps cut away, so as to gain ground for these buildings, till the earth around the House was made level with the lowest stones of the foundation?" I quite agree with Father Beissel that this guess deserves consideration—more consideration than he has given it. Surely no one would mistake for the walls of a building the foundations on which they rested. Walls are of a piece and continuous; foundations are always distinct from them, built of rough stones loosely put together. As a matter of fact, the architects and inspectors above cited testify that they found, under the walls of the Holy House (which are built of Palestinian stone

and mortar) "made ground, and in some parts dust." It seems never to have occurred to them that the walls might have, in some mysterious way, become identified with the foundations on which they were laid; nor indeed could it occur to anyone who had not made up his mind that any explanation of the phenomenon, however lame and even absurd, so it be in the order of nature, is to be preferred to the supernatural one.

Let me now sum up the evidence thus far gathered in favour of the miraculous translation: (1) In the earlier half of the 14th century, pilgrims to Nazareth attest the fact that the Holy House, which, one of them says, formerly stood up against the grotto, is no longer there. (2) In the same half of the same century, there appears for the first time on the hill of Loreto a cottage-shrine without foundations, which is even then a noted place of pilgrimage. (3) The foundations in front of the cave at Nazareth have been found to correspond exactly to the four walls of the Holy House of Loreto. (4) The materials of which the Holy House is built, both stone and mortar, are Palestinian, and the stone in particular is to be found only in and around Nazareth. (5) The hypothesis that pilgrims brought these materials from the East is ex-

cluded by the fact that there is not a scrap of documentary evidence to show that any pilgrim of that time brought as much as a single stone from Palestine to Loreto; by the fact that the cottage shrine at Loreto is without foundations, and cannot, therefore, be supposed to have been built on the spot; by the fact that it was already old and frail-looking when first it appeared there. (6) The idea that it was built on the spot is further excluded by the tradition and the monuments of its stay in the wood and on the hill of the two brothers before it was finally set down where it stands to-day. (7) It is even more peremptorily excluded by the tradition and the monuments of its stay in Tersatto. (8) The immemorial tradition of Loreto itself there is simply no accounting for on the hypothesis mentioned above.

Chevalier and his fellow-critics assume that Teremanus, instead of being as he professes to be, the faithful chronicler of the living tradition of Loreto in his day, made up himself the account of the miraculous translation that he published to the world in 1472. It may not be amiss to cite here what I have elsewhere written to show how untenable this assumption is:

“At page 326, Canon Chevalier sets down

this conclusion, 'duly founded' on documents: 'The legend regarding the translation of the Holy House did not exist before 1472, the date of its first appearance.' With this Mr. Bishop is in agreement. 'It is certain,' he writes (*The Tablet*, Nov. 10, 1906, p. 724), 'that this tract of Teremanus, and no other document, is the original source of the history of the translated Holy House that we all know. It is the primary authority, and behind it we cannot go.' Again (*Ib.*, Nov. 17, p. 764): 'By the date of our next witness, the new traditions of Loreto had already secured their definite triumph.' By the 'new traditions' he means the traditions based on the tract of Teremanus. The old traditions of Loreto, the traditions of the place before 1472, were, according to these authorities, conversant about 'the image that was later called miraculous' (Canon Chevalier) —this, and nothing more.

"Now, the sanctuary of Loreto was a noted place of pilgrimage as far back as 1313. In 1451 it is described by Flavio Blondo as 'the most celebrated shrine in all Italy,' (*Notre Dame de Lorette*, p. 191), and by Marino de Nicolo, in 1459, as a place of 'very great and almost infinite miracles' (*Ib.*, p. 195). Pope Nicholas V went there in 1449, the Emperor Frederic III in 1452, Pius II in 1464, and his

374 THE HOLY HOUSE OF LORETO.

successor, Paul II, while yet Cardinal Pietro Barbo, was miraculously restored to health there, as he himself attests in a grant of indulgence to the sanctuary, November 1, 1464. By the time Teremanus, with a stroke of his pen, established 'the new traditions,' the eyes of all Europe were on Loreto, and the roads leading to it from every Catholic country in all Europe were worn by the feet of pilgrims. This is not the language of rhetoric, but of sober fact. And all these pilgrims, what was it that drew them to Loreto? What went they there to see? Canon Chevalier shall tell us: 'Until the appearance of the legend of the translation [in 1472], this statue [of the Virgin with the Child in her arms] was the treasure of the Church of Loreto.'

"In the fertile brain of Teremanus, the legend is meanwhile taking shape. And such a legend! He will cart away the old traditions as so much rubbish, and set up brand-new ones. He will found a new treasure, forge a new object of devotion. The actual fabric itself of the Church of St. Mary of Loreto shall henceforth be the House of Nazareth, 'wandering, angel-borne.' Mark the astuteness of the man! To render the fable he is weaving more easy of belief, he will multiply miraculous translations. He will take good care not to make the

House come direct from Nazareth to the spot on which it stands. The angels shall bring it by a roundabout way, first to Tersatto, thence over the sea to the place in the wood, which our Douai pilgrim and full many a pilgrim before and after him went to visit, from there to the hill of the two brothers, and finally to the public road. This legend of marvels, woven out of such stuff as dreams are made of, Teremanus, in the month of June, 1472, embodies in his famous tract. In all the foregoing years of the pilgrimage, the fabulous story has been unheard and undreamt of. This notwithstanding, it is no sooner published than incontinently believed by everybody. Dalmatia, which now for the first time is made aware of the stay of the angel-borne House within its borders, sets up a fac-simile of it, graves a record of the event on monuments of stone, and enshrines the memory of it in a classic hymn which is sung there to this day. Nay, pilgrims from that land beyond the Adriatic, clad in picturesque costumes, presently appear in Loreto, and with cries and sobs that 'were enough,' as Riera declares, 'to melt the hardest rock,' implore Our Lady to return to them with her House. And at Loreto, where the people have the old traditions of the sanctuary at their fingers' ends, the order of

the day, on the first appearance of the fable of Teremanus, is 'Off with the old, and on with the new.' In a field, hard by the town, a plot of ground is marked to be pointed out to pilgrims as the second resting-place of the Holy House. Then, in the depths of the forest, a good mile within, trees are felled and a space is cleared, so as to make it plain to the most skeptical that here in very truth the angels set the House down when first they came with it over the sea!

"With the extant 'document' for their chart, our scientific explorers have given a wide berth to Scylla—the miracle of the translation, which is their rock of offence. But they have run straight into Charybdis. They would be rid of the miraculous; they are caught in a very whirlpool of the incredible and the absurd." ¹

There are two kinds of evidence accepted as demonstrative in the law courts, direct and circumstantial. So valid is the latter deemed that men have suffered the death penalty on the strength of it. Now, we have no direct evidence of the fact of the miraculous translation. No one, at least as far as we know to-day, saw the angels bring the House from Nazareth to Tersatto and Loreto. But the circumstantial evidence alone, as set forth above, is enough

¹ "Religious Questions of the Day," Vol. iii, pp. 209-12.

to establish the fact. If the angels brought the House, we can understand how there exists at Loreto an immemorial tradition to that effect; how there are memorials of its stay in the wood of Loreto and on the hill of the two brothers; how there is a tradition as well as monuments of its stay at Tersatto; how it corresponds in length and breadth to the foundations before the cave at Nazareth; how it is made of stone, while during every epoch every building in the district of Loreto, including the first casing that inclosed the House itself, was made of brick; how the materials, both stone and mortar, are Palestinian; how the building was old and frail-looking when first it appeared where it stands to-day; how the building itself, as distinct from the statue of the Virgin with the Child in her arms, was an object of "great veneration" in the 14th century, and regarded with "immense devotion" in the 15th; how it was encased in brick during the early years of the pilgrimage, shortly after its first appearance on the hill of Loreto; how the whole Catholic world has for centuries believed it to be the House of Nazareth; how this belief has been confirmed, and in a real sense warranted, by numberless miracles. If, on the other hand, the miraculous translation were a fiction, how account for the

378 THE HOLY HOUSE OF LORETO.

foregoing facts? Taken singly, they have great weight; taken together they have a cumulative force that is nothing short of demonstrative.

FATHER RINIERI AND THE CHURCH OF ST. MARY "IN FUNDO LAURETI."

In the third volume of his work on the Holy House of Loreto, Father Rinieri S. J. seeks to show that the Church of St. Mary *in fundo Laureti*, referred to in the document of 1194 as having been ceded by the Bishop of Humana to the monastery of Santa Croce Avellana, is no other than St. Mary of Recanati. The case that he makes is very plausible, but to me at least far from convincing. I will give my reasons briefly. Father Rinieri himself cites a document at page 75 which shows that there stood near the castle of Loreto, in the year 1094, a church known as "St. Mary of Loreto." "Might not this," he asks, "be the church of St. Mary *in fundo Laureti* ceded by Jordano to the monastery of Avellana in 1194, that is, St. Mary of Recanati?" The former of the two, yes, but not the latter, because in that case it would have been described as "St. Mary of Recanati." This latter church was not "in fundo Laureti," but, as it is expressly stated in the document of 1194, "in fundo Rasenano q. Antiniano vocatur." It was always known as St. Mary of

Recanati, or again of Castelnuovo. What is more, it was in the hands of the monks of Avellana long before 1194, as even the document issued in that year clearly indicates. Rinieri (Vol. III., p. 9) infers from the expression "*per transantum concedimus*=we grant in virtue of an agreement or transaction," employed by Bishop Jordan, that there was a dispute between the Bishop and the monks regarding the possession of the church, but this is not so much an inference as a guess, and the presumption is clean against it, for the monks had had already possession of St. Mary of Recanati for more than half a century.

The document of 1194 bears intrinsic evidence that the church ceded to the monastery of Avellana was not St. Mary of Recanati. "We grant the church itself of St. Mary," are the words of the concession, "*que exita in fundo Laureti*, in its entirety, with all its revenues and belongings, etc." Father Rinieri adopts the reading of Trombelli "*qua exitu*," instead of "*que exita*" or "*est sita*," and interprets it to mean "as to the revenues or belongings that it has in fundo Laureti." He says St. Mary of Recanati had possessions "*in fundo Laureti*." Now, suppose this was so, and that "*qua exitu*" is the true reading, it would follow that the church was not ceded at

all, but only "its belongings in fundo Laureti;" whereas, in the very next sentence, the document states expressly that the monks are to have and to hold "the aforesaid church with all its possessions and belongings." The expression "as to" would limit the concession to "the belongings in fundo Laureti." You cannot, without violating the most elementary laws of interpretation, make it mean the same as "and" or "with." Besides, to say that you grant "the church itself *as to its belongings* in fundo Laureti, in its entirety, *together with all its belongings*" there, would be tautological past the verge of absurdity. It would seem, then, that there was "in fundo Laureti" an old parish church other than St. Mary of Recanati.

But, says Father Rinieri (*Annali della S. Casa di Loreto*, June 1912, p. 467), "If you grant the existence of a church of St. Mary, which already in 1194 stood in fundo Laureti, you can no longer successfully uphold the authenticity of the Holy House." What if a rational interpretation of the document of 1194 compels us to grant the existence of that church? All the defenders of the Holy House except Rinieri himself assume the existence of an old parish church of St. Mary "in fundo Laureti," and yet believe that they successfully uphold the authenticity of the Holy House, because they

are able to show that the church in question is not to be confounded with the Santa Casa. Nay, Father Rinieri himself, in four several places of his book (Vol. III, pp. 14, 43, 47, 106) shows it, and declares that the proof is incontrovertible, though he seems to have forgotten this when he wrote the words quoted above. I will cite his statement of the case in the last mentioned place (pp. 105–106):

“1.—The church of 1315 belongs to the church and *mensa* of the Bishop of Recanati; that of 1194 was in possession of the monks of Avellana for all time (*in perpetuum*).

“2.—The church of 1315 is not parochial, and has in nowise attached to it the care of souls. It has but one priest, who is charged by the Bishop with receiving and looking after the offerings of the sanctuary. The other is a parish church, served by the monks of Avellana.

“3.—The church of 1315 does not own a foot of land, and will not own it till 1398 (Vogel notes a grant of land in this year to the Holy House as the first that was made). On the other hand, the church [of St. Mary in fundo Laureti] had *forests and lands and vineyards and water-mills* [document of 1194].”

Now these three reasons, which are also given by the other defenders of the authenticity of the Holy House, are declared by Father Rinieri

himself in the very next sentence to be "demonstrative of the distinction between the two churches." And so they are.

We have seen that about the years 1318-1320 Botius of Montelupone was "administrator of half the revenues of the rural church of St. Mary of Loreto," as Pope John XXII attests in his bull of December 24, 1320. On the other hand, Prof. Kresser in his *Auf dem Wege nach Loreto* cites from Theiner a document bearing date this same year, 1320, wherein the Governor of the Marches of Ancona condemns a band of brigands, "at the instance of Philipputius of Montgranario, Procurator of Signor Philip of S. Just," for that "they had come to the church of St. Mary of Loreto and plundered and bore away all the gifts or offerings coming to the said church and belonging to the said Signor Philip" [Cf. *Annali della S. Casa di Loreto*, Oct. 1911, p. 226]. The robbery was perpetrated two years before, i. e., in 1318. That this was the shrine plundered by the Ghibellines in 1313, for which they were condemned in 1315, seems plain from the quality of the plunder, viz., gifts or offerings, for the revenues of an ordinary parish church, such as the rural one "in fundo Laureti," are not of this description. It is true that, according to the document of 1315, the offerings at the shrine belonged to the Bishop

of Recanati, whereas it is, Signor Philip St. Just who is represented in the document of 1320 as having taken action against those who robbed it. But the time was a turbulent one, and the Bishop of Recanati, as Rinieri tells us (Vol. III, p. 103), had been obliged to flee. It would appear, therefore, that the offerings of the shrine had been entrusted for safekeeping to the nobleman Philip St. Just, either by the Bishop or by the Commune of Recanati.

Identifying as he does, the church of St. Mary "in fundo Laureti," with St. Mary of Recanati, Father Rinieri is necessarily led to identify the shrine plundered in 1313, and again in 1318, with "the rural church of St. Mary of Loreto" which is mentioned in the bull of Pope John XXII. But there are grave difficulties in the way of establishing their identity. In 1320 Botius of Montelupone was "administrator of half the revenues" of the rural church. Now, in this same year, it is Signor Philip St. Just who brings the plunderers of the shrine to book, and the offerings are said to belong to him. If it be urged that the robbery took place two years, before, it may be pointed out that Botius must have sent his appeal to the Pope, who was then at Avignon, some considerable time before the bull was issued. In any case, for Father Rinieri the dates are rather uncom-

fortably crowded. And while it is easy to explain, as above, how the offerings of the shrine came to belong to Philip St. Just, it would be anything but easy to explain how Botius could be administrator of half its revenues. Moreover, the Pope's bull of 1320 has reference throughout to stipends and benefices, whereas it is certain that at this time "the church of St. Mary of Loreto, in the district and diocese of Recanati" (so described in the document of 1315) had no benefices or revenues arising therefrom, and was simply a shrine or place of pilgrimage in charge of a chaplain appointed by the Bishop of Recanati to receive the offerings of the pilgrims (document of 1315). The epithet "rural" too, applied to the St. Mary of Loreto referred to in the papal document, implies a consciousness in the writer's mind that there was another St. Mary of Loreto from which this one had to be distinguished. In any case, it would hardly fit the shrine on the hill of Loreto, which was surrounded by forests, and which, as if to differentiate it from the one "in fundo Laureti," is described as being situated "in the district and diocese of Recanati."

If Father Rinieri can give satisfactory proofs of his thesis, I shall be the first to welcome them. But he should beware of saying that the authenticity of the Holy House cannot be

established unless we accept his view. And he should show a little more tolerance of the views of others. It is difficult for any one to reach absolute certainty in matters of this kind. One could wish to be as perfectly sure of even a few things as he seems to be in almost every case where he differs with others. The Apostle admonishes us "not to be more wise than it behooveth us to be wise, but to be wise unto sobriety" (Rom. 12:3).

WORKS BY THE
RT. REV. ALEXANDER MacDONALD, D.D.,
Bishop of Victoria, B.C.

The Symbol of the Apostles.

A Vindication of the Apostolic Authorship of the Creed on the Lines of Catholic Tradition. By RT. REV. ALEX. MACDONALD, D. D., Bishop of Victoria, B. C. 12mo. 377 pp.

Cloth, *net*, 1.25; full morocco, *net*, 2.00

"A splendid work."—*Ecclesiastical Review*.

"In point of originality and brilliant achievement one of the most notable books that has come to a reviewer's desk in many a day."—*Catholic Record*.

"I am too much impressed by the cumulative strength of it to stand off as a doubting critic to find possible flaws." RT. REV. DR. MACNEIL, of St. George, N. F. L.

"A splendid example of critical scholarship."—*The Guidon*.

"We have read it twice, parts of it oftener. We are of the opinion that if some of those who felt called upon to review it had done the same they would hardly have come to the conclusion with respect to it which they seem to have reached. Dr. MacDonald's splendid history of the Apostles' Creed has a fresh interest now for its closing chapter dealing with the name 'Catholic' and when and how it came to be the distinct title of the Church."—REV. L. A. LAMBERT, LL. D., in *New York Freeman's Journal*.

"The author, a brilliant alumnus of the Roman Seminary of Propaganda, and a highly appreciated contributor to several Catholic periodicals, is at once a metaphysician and a scholar. His refutation of Harnack's theory concerning the Creed bears the impress of the twofold quality of his subtle and searching mind. We believe the refutation in question is complete."—Mgr. L. A. Paquet, of Laval University.

"It is a relief to come across a work like Bishop MacDonald's *Symbol of the Apostles*, after the dreary waste

of academic discussions that centre about this well-worn confession of Christian faith."—Very Rev. Dr. Shahan, in *The Catholic University Bulletin*.

"The student, be he a Roman Catholic, or a catholic-minded Presbyterian, or an out-and-out disciple of John Calvin, will read Dr. MacDonald's Symbol of the Apostles with interest and not without profit."—*The Presbyterian Witness*.

"The Symbol of the Apostles by Dr. MacDonald is a work of great erudition, and I congratulate the publishers on the way they have executed their part."—N. C. Matz, Bishop of Denver.

A work of great merit and standard erudition.—Most Rev. Dr. Begin, Archbishop of Quebec.

A contribution of the highest value to the historic aspects of our belief.—Bishop MacDonald, of Charlottetown, P. E. I.

It is a learned work and should be in the library of every priest and educated layman.—Bishop Horstman, of Cleveland.

A scholarly and edifying book.—*The Catholic Columbian*.

Based on original research and built up by critical acumen and masterly scholarship.—*The Catholic Record*.

Dr. MacDonald shows a very full and accurate knowledge of the early writers whose works have a bearing on the subject . . . and by a process of keen and logical reasoning, builds up a new defence too solid and strong for the artillery of historical criticism.—*The Cross*.

Bishop MacDonald has given us in this volume a painstaking scholarly work, . . . from a point of view not so much in evidence in the present day discussion of the subject as that which it opposes.—*The Homiletic Monthly*.

The book is well indexed, and there is a list of the authorities consulted in its preparation. His readers will thank him for yielding to the request to add the very satisfactory closing chapter on the Catholic name.—*The Boston Pilot*.

The Symbol in Sermons.

A series of Twenty-five Short Sermons on the Articles of the Creed. By RT. REV. ALEX. MACDONALD, D. D. 12mo. 214 pp. net, 1.00

"Its chapters are pregnant with thought. . . . The work is well done, clear, definite, and complete."—*The Catholic Transcript*.

"It is lucid and easy in style, concise in arrangement, and magnetic in its erudition."—*The Catholic Register*.

"This work is all it professes to be. It might also be styled excellent sermons on the Apostles' Creed."—*The Church Progress*.

"We recommend this volume to our readers for their use and as a most appropriate gift to the inquiring Protestant."—*The Catholic Record*.

"We think that this volume of Dr. MacDonald's will take a high place among works of this class. Altogether, in matter and method, these sermons are well suited both to serve as sources to which preachers can have recourse, and models for their own work."—*The Homiletic Monthly*.

The Sacrifice of the Mass.

"This is a book of the highest merit, and one that should be in the hands of both the clergy and laity."—*The Catholic Columbian-Record*.

"Three chapters are headed: 1. The True Idea of Sacrifice, 2. History of the Sacrificial Idea in the Mass. 3. The Sacrificial Idea in the Mass. A careful analysis of each chapter precedes the work, and an appendix of quotations is added."—*The Sacred Heart Review*.

"Theologians will find this book luminous and interesting."—*The Pittsburg Catholic*.

"This explanation sets the reality of the sacrifice of the Mass in a new light and defends it against the more or less rationalist theories that have been recently broached. No doubt this book, like the *Symbol of the Apostles*, will excite comment."—*The Canadian Messenger of the Sacred Heart*.

"To us the most luminous part of it seems his discussion of the Last Supper and its relation to the Cross. We are all so prone or so impelled by our limitations to regard truth as if it were a set of separate texts, like people walking in a wooded country where they can only see small spaces one by one, that the most helpful writer is he who guides us to an eminence where we can see that things we thought diverse are but one or parts of one whole."—*The Casket*.

"A second reading has deepened the first impression. I really think you have made a valuable contribution to theological science."—Right Rev. Dr. MacNeil; Bishop of St. George, Nfld., in a letter to the author.

"The Sacrifice of the Mass," by the Rt. Rev. Alex. MacDonald, D. D., is "an historical and doctrinal inquiry into the nature of the Eucharistic Sacrifice." Within the compass of six score pages Bishop MacDonald gives a succinct, scholarly, and adequate demonstration of the fact that the traditional Catholic conception of Holy Mass as being identically the same Sacrifice primarily offered at the Last Supper and on the Cross—a conception attested to by a cloud of witnesses throughout the centuries—is the very truth. As in the author's previous works, "*The Symbol of the Apostles*" and "*The Symbol in Sermons*," there is in this volume abundant evidence of many-sided erudition, trenchant logic, luminous exposition, and that suggestiveness of reserved power which stamps the work of the well-equipped scholar. The book is brought out in neat and attractive form by the Christian Press Association, New York.—*Ave Maria*. Fine cloth binding, net 1.00

Religious Questions of the Day. Vol. I.

BY RT. REV. ALEX. MACDONALD, D. D., Bishop of Victoria,
12mo. cloth net 1.00

Volume I. 203 pp., is a book of five essays and two appendixes treating of *The Biblical Question—The Virgin Birth—Mary Ever a Virgin—The Assumption of the Virgin Mary, and Bridging the Grave.*

"Every student of theology will be stimulated by the book, even if one must differ at times from the learned author * * * the author displays a fine taste and a wide acquaintance with purely secular literature.—*Catholic World.*

"Simple and direct are his books, but what a world of toil they represent. * * They are, indeed, testimonies to a devotion to Sacred Science, and they are also beyond question proofs of a many-sided erudition which is as edifying as it is instructive.—*Catholic Record.*

"We recommend this work unreservedly to our educated Catholic laymen."—*The Guidon.*

"In forceful presentation of solid arguments and freshness of color given to oldtime questions, they (the essays) are equally meritorious."—*Ave Maria.*

Religious Questions of the Day. Vol. II.

Dr. MacDonald discusses the *Symbol in the New Testament—The Discipline of the Secret—The Ethical Aspect of Bribery—A Notable Book* (the much read book of Professor Drummond on "Natural Law in the Spiritual World,") and *The Imagination.* 223 pp. cloth net 1.00

"It is in the firm mastering of those permanent truths—the wisdom, principles, divine and human, the clear insight into their meaning and bearings, together with the practical method of their application to certain subjects now occupying men's mind—it is in these qualities here in *actu secundo* that constitute the permanent worth of these essays. * * * set forth with the author's characteristic precision, perspicuity, and beauty of diction."—*Ecclesiastical Review.*

"Treated with a dignity and sureness sadly wanting in the work of the apologists outside the Church who have

taken flight so ignominiously before the onslaughts of the 'higher criticism.' * * * Few present day writers on Catholic topics are clearer or more satisfying than Dr. MacDonald."—*The Pilot*.

Religious Questions of the Day. Vol. III.

SOME MODERNISTIC THEORIES AND TENDENCIES EXPOSED,
BY the RT. REV. ALEXANDER MACDONALD, D. D. Vol. III.
12mo. 329 pp. net, 1.00

Contents: The Gospel Narratives; Are They Really Discrepant? The Catholic Encyclopaedia and the Higher Criticism—Alleged Process of Evolution—False in Name and in Fact—The Bible and Modern Difficulties—The Bible and the Higher Criticism—Biblical Difficulties—A Novel with a Purpose—History and Inspiration—The Firmament—The Atonement—God's Foreknowledge of Moral Evil—The Date of Our Lord's Birth.—Mgr. Duchesne and the Date of Nativity—The Holy House of Loreto—The Materials of the Holy House—The Assumption of the Blessed Virgin Mary and a Charge of Modernism—The Assumption of the Blessed Virgin Mary—Papal and Conciliar Infallibility—St. Augustine and Evolution—The Apostles' Creed—A Critique in the Dublin Review—The Eucharistic Sacrifice—Grace the Life of God in the Soul.

Meditations on the Blessed Virgin.

From the German of Rev. Francis Gabrini, S. J. New edition carefully revised by the Rt. Rev. Alexander MacDonald, D. D., Bishop of Victoria, Canada.

This book will fill a long-felt want and may be used during the month of May at the evening devotions. Each Meditation is divided into Three Points. This plan will be found convenient for priests who have to preach or speak on the Blessed Virgin. It will not be difficult for them to find, in such a variety of matter, what they are in quest of; and since the division is already made, and the matter already in order, they can have no further trouble than to develop, a little more, the matter furnished them in these pages. For religious this book will fill a niche that has long been vacant.

Bound in cloth and contains 384 pages: net, \$1.00

A SERIES OF SMALL BOOKS FROM THE WRITINGS OF
ST. ALPHONSUS LIGUORI, Edited by
Rt. Rev. Alex. MacDonald, D.D.

WAITING ON GOD, WALKING WITH GOD,
TALKING WITH GOD, WORKING FOR GOD

In neat and handy form these deeply devotional works are ready for the public. Bishop MacDonald has made a judicial selection of the most striking treatises on the love of God, the little books, well bound and cheap are suitable for visits to the Blessed Sacrament. Private Retreats and special devotions, etc. They will be highly appreciated by both young and old.—*Newark Monitor*.

These little books deal with the various phases of the spiritual life and point out the way to attain perfection. They can be used with profit for spiritual reading both by the laity and by religious.—*Catholic Bulletin*.

These delightful and very helpful little works will prove veritable treasures to all who are honestly trying to save their souls.—*Western Catholic*.

The subjects are well chosen and follow a natural sequence, viz., Importance of Salvation, Eternity, Death, Hell, Love of Jesus, etc., etc.—*The Catholic Times, Liverpool, England*.

These are charming little works and will do much in promoting the greater glory of God. The Christian Press always make the book and the price with the intention of reaching the greater numbers.—*The Tablet*.

Bishop MacDonald has in these neat and attractive little books gathered in a very small compass much of the very essence of the numerous writings of this great Doctor of the Church, and hence deserve a wide circulation.—*The Exponent*.

Black Silk Cloth net .30 Seal, limp, gold edges net .50
Genuine Morocco, gold roll, red under gold edges
net \$1.00 postage extra 3c

Christian Press Association
Publishing Company

26 BARCLAY STREET

NEW YORK

54065

